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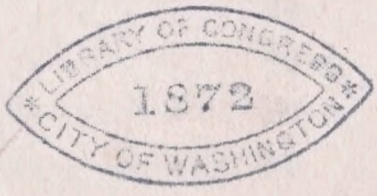
TRAITS AND TRIALS

OF

EARLY LIFE.



Letitia Elizabeth

BY L. E. L.

AUTHOR OF "THE IMPROVISATRICE," &c.

PHILADELPHIA:
E. L. CAREY & A. HART—CHESNUT STREET.

1837.

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BROWN & SINQUET, PRINTERS.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE TWIN SISTERS,	13
THE LITTLE BOY'S BED TIME,	88
THE SAILOR,	90
THE LADY MARIAN,	92
THE PRISONER,	97
MABEL DACRE'S FIRST LESSONS,	99
THE DEAD ROBIN,	119
THE SOLDIER'S HOME,	121
THE INDIAN ISLAND,	125
FRANCES BEAUMONT,	153
THE HISTORY OF A CHILD,	219

PREFACE.

This volume is of a different order from those of mine which the public have hitherto received with such indulgence. I trust that it will win an equally kind reception. My few words of preface must be rather addressed to those who direct my present class of readers, than to the readers themselves. My object has been rather to interest than to amuse; to excite the imagination through the softening medium of the feeling. Sympathy is the surest destruction of selfishness. Children, like the grown person, grow the better for participation in the sufferings where their own only share is pity. They are also the better for the generous impulse which leads them to rejoice in the hope and happiness of others, though themselves have nothing in common with the objects of their emotion. Such is the aim of my principal narratives. In the first, I endeavour to soften the heart by a kindly regret for unmerrited sorrow. The very youngest ought to know how much there is to endure in existence; it will teach them thankfulness in their own more fortunate lot, and meekness in bearing their own lighter burthens. In the other tales I have rather sought to show how exertion, under difficult circum-

stances, is rewarded by success. Young and old, rich and poor, have their troubles; and all experience will bear me out in the assertion, that patience, fortitude, and affection, are ever strong in obtaining the mastery over them. Early lessons of cheerful endurance cannot be better taught than by example.

Wordsworth truly says "that, with the young, poetry is a passion." My aim in the poems scattered through these pages has been to make one taste cultivate another, and to render the flowers scattered around our daily path, and the loveliness of nature yet dearer because associated with the early affections and with snatches of song. To connect the external object with the internal emotion is the sweetest privilege of poetry.

I can now only entreat a continuance of that favour which has so long excited my hope, and still more, my gratitude.

L. E. L.

THE TWIN SISTERS.

THE TWIN SISTERS.

"I AM afraid the noise of the children disturbs you," said Mr. Dalton to his wife, as the loud laugh and ringing steps upon the gravel walk told the approach of the two playmates.

"It is so cheerful," said the invalid, while her eyes brightened, as she turned her head in the direction whence the sounds came. The little feet became inaudible on the turf which they were now treading, but the clear laughter was still more distinct, and, in another moment, the branches of the dog-rose were dashed aside, a shower of the crimson leaves fell around, and the two children stood panting and breathless at their mother's side.

"What hands!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton; but the invalid only smiled at the soil which their eager grasp had left on her white dressing-gown.

"We were at work in our garden," said the eldest girl, colouring at the implied rebuke, "when we heard that mamma was come out, and so we ran here"——

"That she might not have a moment's peace," said

their father; but his voice was softer than his words, and, emboldened by his smile, the youngest added:—

"We will be so quiet, now." And both sat down on the grass at their mother's feet. Mrs. Dalton was far too indulgent to permit such a penance as doing nothing is to the native activity of childhood, and a thousand slight commissions were devised, which, with little fatigue to herself, gave full occupation to their restless spirits. Now they were despatched to the further side of the opposite meadow to fetch some of the violets which grew on the southern bank in such profusion; and then it was a task of equal interest to seek if, in the more sheltered portion, the lilies of the valley yet gave promise of blossom. Any traveller riding up the hill, whose winding road in part over-looked the above scene, would have surely lingered, and then gone on his way rejoicing that he had witnessed such happiness.

The softened light of that most beautiful half hour which precedes the sun-set, was upon the air, and the huge forms of the old trees flung forwards their gigantic shadows. A few of the central clouds had already begun to redden, and the windows of the distant village shone like gleams of fire through the elms of the boundary hedge. The pleasure ground sloped to the edge of the park-like meadow, and was the admiration of the neighbourhood for the variety and richness of its flowers; and June is the month for an English spring. Dalton Park was one of those old-fashioned houses, all corners and angles, associate

with the past, and possessing an interest which belongs to no newly built habitation. Not that Dalton Park aspired to the dignity of historical recollections; its connexion was with domestic feelings, with the thought that the old walls had long been warmed by the cheerful presence of humanity, and that the ancient roof had long sheltered hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, like unto your own.

The western aspect, which looked down upon the meadow, was almost covered with fragrant creepers. The jessamine had as yet scarcely begun to unfold its long and slender leaves, but the honeysuckle was in all its bravery; covered with thousands of those fairy trumpets from whose sweet breath the laden bees were slowly wending homewards. The small porch, for the principal entrance was on the other side, was hidden by the small Ayrshire rose, whose delicate crimson flowers, ascending year after year, were in rapid progress towards the roo The lawn shone with the coloured foliage of the gay season: the beds were crowded with the "painted populace" of spring, and thickets of scented shrubs filled the air with odours. Those two beautiful children suited well with such a picture—they were in perpetual motion, and their long chesnut curls were but the more glossy for the wind that tossed the silken lengths, and the sunshine that turned the rich brown into gold. Their bright black eyes grew yet brighter with eagerness, as, laughing, they said, "How tall they were grown!" and each pursued the other's

shadow, while the exercise deepened the already vivid red on each warm and glowing cheek.

But happiness is not for this world—a conviction that cannot be too soon acquired: it will destroy a thousand vain expectations, dissipate the most perplexing of our illusions—the early knowledge that life is but a trial, whose triumph is hereafter, and this earth a place appointed for that sorrow and patient endurance which is gradually fitting us for a better and a happier state. With this belief ever present before us, we should be more ready to enjoy the many moments of content and rest vouchsafed on our pilgrimage; and more ready to submit to that suffering which but turns the heart to its home which is in heaven. Even like the glorious sun-set which, of all hours in the day, seems the most to mingle the influences of the world above with that below—when the golden light invests all familiar objects with a glory not their own; and yet the long shadows fall, the deepest heralds of the coming night: so do the lights and shadows of human existence mingle together.

Mrs. Dalton's pale cheek flushed, and her eye wore somewhat of its former brightness, as she watched those two graceful and happy creatures bound over the grass, on an infinity of schemes which almost always ended in bringing them to her side. But no one who looked on that face with other than the undiscerning eye of childhood but must have read on that wan, though youthful, brow, the slow, but certain, approach of death. Mrs. Dalton had been born

in India, and, like those more delicate exotics which pine and perish in a northern clime, she was fading, but as gradually as the flower that languishes for its native earth.

Mrs. Dalton had been united to her husband at a very early age; and had loved him perhaps the more that she had no one else to love. Her own parents had died when she was too young to remember them—she was scarcely two years of age. From motives of convenience, she was for a time placed at school in Calcutta, and thence consigned, like a bale of goods, to the care of a lady at Kensington, who took a select number of young ladies. She was about sixteen when transferred again to the house of her guardian; and in the course of a few months married to Mr. Dalton. Her guardian was not sorry to see resigned into other hands the responsibility attendant on the charge of a beautiful girl, whose wealth added to the anxiety.

Mr. Dalton was the very reverse of his wife. Strong, alike in mind and body, his temper was unyielding, not to say stern. He was a man who made no allowances. Whatever ought to be done, that he expected should be done—and at once. He liked regularity, and expected prompt obedience, and that every one else should be as active as himself. Timid, languid, and indolent—shrinking from exertion to which she felt unequal, Mrs. Dalton's oriental temperament was only to be roused by an appeal to her feelings or her generosity. Actuated by either of

these motives, the gentle mind and slight frame seemed animated with a vigour that might have been held incompatible with her soft, sweet nature. Mr. Dalton would fain have carried this spirit farther; he perpetually lamented that "Indiana would listen to every impostor who had a few sorrowful words at command, and that it was enough to ruin those children the way in which she spoilt them." Still it was impossible to be angry with a creature so lovely, and so frail, and moreover so utterly devoted to him. It had been long, however, since a sound of reproach had been heard from Mr. Dalton's lips. His was no temper to hope against hope, and, from the first, he had seen that his wife's malady was fatal. She was now dying of consumption, and every thing else was forgotten in the deep love that sought, at least, to soothe the passage to the grave.

At this moment a loud exclamation from one of the children made Mrs. Dalton start, and her husband look round, half in fear, and half in anger. It was but the triumphant ejaculation that announced the capture of a large butterfly, whose brilliant colours seemed caught from the summer skies which brightened its brief existence. Ellen was seen the first, holding her lightly clasped hand, lest the glittering dust should be brushed from its delicate wings.

"You have frightened your mamma out of her senses," said their father.

"Nay, nay," exclaimed Mrs. Dalton, with one of her own gentle smiles; "I knew at once that it was

a cry of pleasure. But, Ellen, you have not killed the poor insect?"

"No," said the child, "but you could not go to see it, and it was so pretty we could not help bringing it to you to see."

"I shall see it best as it is flying away."

The hint was instantly taken, and, the little hand opening, the prisoner flew off as fast as its gossamer pinions could bear it.

"Would you like, Ellen, to have some giant snatch you up, and carry you off, for the sake of showing how your hair curled—should you not be very much frightened?"

Ellen stood silent, looking pleadingly into her mother's face; but Julia, who had drawn close to her sister, said,

"But there are no giants, mamma, to carry us away to look at us."

"No, love, but there are many ways in which all may be as needlessly tormented as that poor butterfly; and, by thinking how little we should ourselves like it, we shall surely grow more careful how we pain others. And now go, and see if there are any buds on the white rose tree, and, if there are, bring me one."

"I wish you would not talk, Indiana, it exhausts you," said Mr. Dalton: "besides, what did it matter about a nonsensical butterfly? you will make those children as soft-hearted as yourself."

"My dearest Albert," exclaimed Mrs. Dalton, "I

believe half the cruelty in after life proceeds from the indifference with which children are accustomed to torment the few things within their little sphere of influence. We are all of us too selfish and too careless of what others may feel, and, from the very first, I wish Ellen and Julia to think of what may be suffered from their own heedlessness. Let them, above all things, be kind-hearted."

"Provided it does not," remarked her husband, "degenera'e into weakness."

Mrs. Dalton smiled her assent, and the return of the children, with the white rose, put a stop to further conversation. The shadows gradually lengthened, and the gigantic outline of the elms became confused one with another. Fain would Mrs. Dalton have lingered in the open air, all was so calm, so lovely, every breath she drew brought a differing odour, as first one shrub, and then another, gave their hoarded sweetness to the evening wind. But Mr. Dalton grew impatient for her return to the house; and she could not say to him, "What does it matter to me? the chill air is of little moment now; I feel that my hours are numbered, and that no human care can avail to prolong their amount." Still she rose at his first word, and was at once carried to the dressing-room.

As soon as she was recovered from the fatigue of moving, she begged to be placed near the window. The warmer hues of the sun-set had faded into one deep, rich purple. Only on the furthest verge of the horizon floated a few white clouds, on which the

crimson lingered to the last; all below was tranquil, as in that stillness which precedes sleep. Not a leaf stirred on the tree, and the evening song of the birds had ceased. The colours of the variegated shrubbery were growing more and more indistinct, and the grass of the meadow had already caught the shadow of night. Now and then a low whirring sound was heard upon the air, and, borne on its dim and spectre-like wings, the old owl swept heavily from one elm tree to another. The night-scented plants now came out in all their fragrance, and the musk rose, outside the window, filled the room with its odour. At every moment the sky was growing clearer and darker, and the silvery star of evening shone with that pure and spiritual light which seems so peculiarly a message from above. She longed to speak of the its own. Mrs. Dalton's eyes were fixed on that star, she drank in its tremulous ray as if it were numberless fancies which connected themselves with that star; but she felt that they were unreal, and hesitated to speak of such folly. She wished to bid her husband think of her, as he watched that calm and distant planet; and then she almost rebuked herself for the vain romance of her wish. "He will think of me," she whispered, "with strong and enduring affection—it is only the heart of a woman that links itself with these fanciful associations."

But, even while she gazed, the light became tremulous and indistinct; and her head sunk back on the pillows of her arm-chair. She was immediately car-

ried to bed, and, for nearly four hours, lay in a state of almost insensibility. She recovered sufficiently to take some nourishment from the old Indian nurse who had attended her from her birth, and who now watched her death-bed as devotedly as she had done her cradle. In about a quarter of an hour, she fell into a deep sleep, while the faithful creature, hanging over her, almost counted every breath which her mistress drew. Thus passed the night away, and the nurse was about to resign her place, which she always did most reluctantly, when a change, passing over the face of the beloved sleeper, induced her to remain. Mrs. Dalton roused up suddenly, more than refreshed, quite animated, by her slumber. The rose burnt upon her cheek, and her large clear eyes filled with unusual light. The thin, emaciated hand alone denoted the long-suffering invalid.

"Ask Mr. Dalton to come here," said she.

Eda was surprised, for generally her mistress's chief anxiety was that he should be disturbed as little as possible. The wish, however, was at once obeyed, and, in a few minutes, Mr. Dalton was in the room.

"Eda, fetch the children, but do not hurry them," said the sufferer, striving to raise herself on the pillow. She was unequal to the exertion, and sank back on her husband's extended arm.

"Yes, here," whispered she, resting her head on his shoulder. "I wished to speak to you, Albert," said she, "but, now I see you, I have nothing to say. Yes, thank you for all your kindness to a weak, suf-

fering creature, who must often have sorely tried your patience." A closer pressure to his heart was all Mr. Dalton's answer, his lips quivered, but in silence; and, for an instant, he turned his face aside. The children, though their little feet were stealing along, were now heard.

"Indiana, they must not disturb you," exclaimed Mr. Dalton.

"I must, I must see them," cried she, more eagerly than he had ever known her answer him before.

They came in, and stole gently to the bed-side.

"Fling back the curtains," said Mrs. Dalton; "I am weary of this pale and sickly lamp-light."

Her wish was immediately obeyed, and the bright day-break of a June morning at once filled the sick-chamber. For a few moments the long silken eye-lashes lay heavily on the burning cheek—the first effort to bear the day was too much. She soon, however, gazed around her again, and her eyes rested, how fondly! on the faces of her children. It was a strange contrast that room—all seemed so fresh and so glad. The rosy hues of the morning gladdened every object on which they fell; the crimson-touched bunches of the honeysuckle sent in their perfume at the open window, while the trees beyond glittered in the sunshine, more glittering from the early dew yet sparkling on the branches. The cheerful singing of the birds made every bough musical, and one, it was the lark, chanting its morning hymn, seemed to pour down its song from the very gate of heaven. It was

"Singing like an angel in the clouds."

The two children suited such a morning, the golden sunbeams turned their light brown hair to gold, and their colour was as fresh as the flowers in the garden below: how different from the feverish flush on the cheek of their mother! The joyous beauty of inanimate nature but made the contrast sadder and deeper with suffering humanity. For once, the loveliness of external nature was unheeded by Mrs. Dalton—that loveliness on which she had never before gazed without a thrill of delight and gratitude. But now, as her gaze wandered from her husband to her children, she thought but of the brief time accorded to the deep emotions of earthly love; she felt that, indeed, death had its bitterness which the hope of an hereafter might soothe, but not subdue. Tenderly she passed her hand over the bright heads that scarcely reached to her pillow; she longed to say somewhat to their father about them. But to bespeak his tenderness for those so soon to be orphans was almost to doubt it, and she only asked him to lift them up, that she might kiss them.

"They must not stay," said Mr. Dalton, seeing how faint she became.

The old Indian nurse led them to the door, whither their mother's eye followed them; it then turned towards their father's face, whence it never moved again. The flush gradually faded into utter paleness, and the head, which rested on Mr. Dalton's arm, was

white and scarcely more animate than that of a marble statue. His sight had lost somewhat of its usual clear distinctness, or his eyes were filled with tears: suddenly he dashed them away, and leant eagerly over his wife.

"Eda" exclaimed he, in an agitated whisper "she is fainting."

"No," said the aged nurse, "it is all over."

Both stood for a moment motionless, breathless, when Mr. Dalton rushed from the room; he could not bear even that faithful old creature to witness an emotion which he felt he could not master.

It was a hard task to teach those poor children that their mother was dead. Death is so incomprehensible to a child. They would not believe that their mother would not return. "Mamma can't do without us," said Ellen. "I am sure she will come back for us."

"She will never come back." replied Eda.

"Then why did she not take us with her?" exclaimed Julia.

"You will go to her in time, if you are good children," was the old nurse's answer.

"Let us go at once," cried they in a breath.

It was in vain to make them understand the impossibility; and that night, for the first time in their lives, the twins cried themselves to sleep.

"I know where Mamma is," whispered Julia to her sister; "though they keep the house so dark that

we may not find her. I heard them say that their mistress was in the south room."

"Let us go there;" exclaimed Ellen. "When nurse goes down to dinner—we can walk so quietly."

The time soon came, and the twins stole out together Ellen, who was the most timid of the two, hesitated a little as they opened the door of the darkened apartment, but Julia whispering, "Mamma won't be angry," encouraged her, and they entered the room together.

"Where is Mamma?" asked Ellen, looking first eagerly at the bed, and then more anxiously towards the chairs.

"I heard them say that she was here," exclaimed Julia, whose eyes were fast filling with tears: at that moment the coffin rivetted the attention of both. Each approached it, and each at the same moment recognised their mother "Why does she sleep in that strange box?" asked Ellen, in a frightened whisper.

"We must take care not to wake her," answered Julia, in a still lower tone. Both remained watching her, still and silent, for a considerable time.

"I wish she would wake," at last said Julia, and, stooping down, kissed the cold white hand extended over the shroud. Ellen did the same thing, and both started back at the icy chill. It would seem as if the sight and touch of death brought its own mysterious consciousness. The two children stood, pale and awe-struck, gazing on the well known, yet unfamilar, face that, cold and ghastly, now answered

not to their looks again. They passed their little arms around each other, and clinging together, with a sweet sense of companionship, neither spoke nor moved for a considerable time; at last Ellen, still holding her sister's hand, knelt down, and whispered, "Let us say our prayers." And the two orphans repeated, beside their mother's coffin, the infantine petitions they had learnt beside that mother's knee.

They were thus employed when Eda entered the chamber. Her step disturbed them, and they ran towards her, and throwing themselves into her arms, began to weep bitterly. It was remarkable that, from that time, the twins never enquired when "Mamma would come back," but they listened, with an attention beyond their years, when the aged Indian woman spoke of her own earnest and simple hope whose home was beyond the grave. To her care they were principally left. Mr. Dalton was often out, he found the solitude of his house insupportable. He had been accustomed to have his lightest movement watched by eyes whose affection triumphed over even the trial of suffering, and the languor of disease. Indiana, even when too weak to speak, had always a smile to give in answer; and, to a man of his temper, silent assent was a pleasant method of continuing the conversation.

There are always an ample sufficiency of compassionate neighbours ready to console one who, by common consent, is styled "the disconsolate widower.' He dined out, he spent whole days out, and, beyond

a brief summons to his breakfast table, a summons always obeyed with a species of awe, saw but little of the children. He wondered at their silence, and then felt almost disposed to be angry, for he often heard their voices when he came upon them unexpectedly in the garden, or entered an apartment where they happened to be. But both the twins were of timid tempers—Julia less than Ellen—but even she could only be courageous when compared with her sister. Their father's natural gravity and silence overawed them—to cling to each other, to answer the meekest little "yes," or "no," possible. A few kind words would soon have induced them to talk, but their father did not understand the art of making them do so.

Mr. Dalton had no near female relative, but there are always ready friends, able and willing to settle everything in the world for everybody. These considered the somewhat neglected state of the childdren as a case, of all others, calling for neighbourly interposition. Some recommended a school to Mr. Dalton, others a governess, but, still more, a wife. The owner of Dalton Park was however not a man to be advised, at least, if people disired that their advise should be taken. An impatient shrug of the shoulder and a still deeper silence was the utmost reply that the ingenious insinuation, or even the more direct attack, ever produced. Every time Mr. Dalton went from home, it was universally decided that he was gone to be married; still, though there is an old proverb stating that what everybody says must be true,

yet there is no rule without an exception. Though everybody said Mr. Dalton was gone to be married, still he persisted in coming home single; but at last, the report was fairly used out. His neighbours grew tired of predicting what never came true. His marriage, which happened at last, took them all by surprise. No one had had the pleasure of foreseeing anything about it.

"Yesterday, at St. George's, Hanover Square, Eliza Meredith, daughter of the late John Meredith, Esq., to Albert Dalton, Esq., of Dalton Park," was the first intimation his neighbours recieved. To think that they should only hear his marriage from the newspapers! The same post brought also letters to his steward and house-keeper, directing certain preparations to be made for the reception of himself and his bride, who were to arrive after a fortnight's tour. All was consternation in his own house: the servants, who, for two years, had been accustomed to have pretty well their own way, exceedingly disapproved of their master's marrying Selfishness is hypocritical by nature, and seizes on the first decent excuse as a cloak; so their discontent took the shape of pity for the two poor children, who were to be subjected to all the tyranny of a step-mother. The house-keeper was the first to communicate the intelligence, and she sent an invitation to the nurse for herself and the twins to drink tea. This was a compliment to Eda, she was a sort of rival potentate, as absolute over her nursery as the other was over her own more extensive

domain. Contrary to the established rule on such occasions there was no jealousy between these rival powers; indeed the humble and patient nature of the Indian rendered dispute all but impossible. To the children such a visit was a great treat; they looked forward to what seemed to them Mrs. Whyte's inexhaustible stores of cakes and preserves: moreover any change was an amusement to those who rarely stirred beyond the boundaries of their own Park. Five o'clock saw them seated round the walnut-tree table, shining like a looking-glass To Ellen and Julia it was a constant source of amusement seeing themselves reflected in the polished surface, while the said polish was a perpetual triumph to Mrs. Whyte, who boasted that her new mistress might go over the furniture with her white cambric handkerchief, and find it unsoiled when she had done. The room was small, but lofty; and the chill of a November evening excluded by scarlet stuff curtains: it had been panelled with oak, which however had been painted white, a proceeding which added to the cheerfulness rather than to the beauty. It was lined with closets, and adorned with bottles, and regular rows of white pots marked with every variety of jam and jelly. These were however all left to the imagination, for drawer and door were kept carefully locked; and Mrs. Whyte's keys safely lodged in that vast receptacle—her pocket.

The party were assembled by five o'clock—the nurse and house-keeper duly occupying two old-

fashioned arm-chairs on each side the fire, while the two children were placed on stools at their feet. The two aged servants were singular contrasts. Mrs. Whyte was the very model of a neat, pretty old woman, Her pale brown hair, a little tinged with gray, parted as it had parted all her life, in two equal divisions on the forehead; the high muslin cap was like a pyramid of snow. Mrs. Whyte would not have worn a coloured ribbon for the world. A muslin handkerchief was neatly pinned down in front, and a brown silk gown completed her attire. We had nearly forgotten a white apron, also a ribbon, from which hung a pin-cushion, whose gaity quite enlivened her whole appearance; it boasted all the colours of the rainbow; but it was the work of "the dear children," and always worn at such visits. At other times it was wrapped in divers folds of silver paper, and laid up, literally, in lavender. With small delicate features, a complexion which retained much of its original fairness—age had past over her smiling countenance as lightly as possible; she seemed in complete keeping with comfort and quiet around her --she must have been known any where for an Englishwoman. Eda, on the contrary, obviously belonged to a far distant country. Her high and finely cut features expressed more passion and more determination than belonged to the soft and gentle face of the other;—and her skin of a dark hut clear olive, together with her thick black hair, gave something sombre to her appearance. Her dress, nevertheless,

was in a more gorgeous taste; though the taste with which the colours were assimilated prevented it from being gaudy.—Her turban was of pure white, but her dress was a print of a richly variegated pattern, and a crimson shawl, whose folds she well knew how to manage, fell around her like drapery;—she also wore a pair of large gold earings, an ornament suiting well with her peculiar and stately bearing. The highest praise that have been bestowed on the housekeeper's appearance was that of a neat, cheerful, and respectable old woman;—but the Indian appealed to the imagination, and might well have past for some captive Queen, grown aged in captivity. The dignity of misfortune was around her, for Eda had known much sorrow, and much suffering.

Beside these two representatives of advanced age, were those who as yet were but entering life, in all its freshness and its beauty. The twins were uncommonly lovely children. India gave its lustre and its darkness to their large black eyes, and England its rosy fairness to their complexion; while a profusion of glossy auburn hair hung down in thick curls to the waist. They were alike, only Julia was taller, and had more colour than her sister, and on all occasions was the one who rather took the lead, and encouraged her shy and timid sister. It was a touching thing to witness the entire affection of the orphans. They were never apart; their little stools were always drawn close together; if they were running in the garden, the shadow of the one was sure to fall

on that of the other. If the one read, the other was at her side, reading from the same page; and at night each fell asleep in the other's arms. Though equally generous, and affectionate, both had warm tempers, yet a word almost would subdue them into penitence and tears; still that anger was never turned on each other; from their birth they had never had a dispute; everything that they had was in common; and any thing given to Julia was sure to be shared with Ellen; and Ellen, in her turn, was as ready to divide with Julia.

Tea was ready almost as soon as they entered the room; but there was obviously a weight on Mrs. Whyte's spirits, and the cakes and marmalade were disturbed with a more than usual number of "poor dears," and divers mysterious and insignificant shakes of the head. The children being busily employed in eating, and both herself and visitor drawn a little apart, and armed with cups of most fragrant tea, the housekeeper addressed the nurse, after a deep drawn sigh, and a preliminary shake of the head.

"I suppose you have heard the news?" Though for her to have heard it approached to an impossibility —and her having heard it would have been a sore disappointment to the communicator.

"News," replied Eda, "what is it?"

"The worst news that this house has heard for many a day."

The affectionate Indian turned a startled glance on the two children; but no, there they were, looking

equally well and happy; so, satisfied, she contented herself with an enquiring glance at her companion.

"Ah! you may well look at those poor dear children," continued Mrs. Whyte, who possessed to the highest degree the art of working up her hearers into a state of miserable suspense by what she called preparing them for the worst.

"Is there," exclaimed the nurse, "any illness in the neighbourhood?"

"Oh no; I wish that were all."

"All, that all!" said Eda, to whom the illness of the children, to whom she was so fondly attached, seemed a calamity of the most formidable order. "What can be worse? my master, has anything happened to him?"

"Yes, it is of my master I am speaking; but he is well enough."

Eda's anxiety was now sufficiently quieted to enable her to wait patiently for Mrs. Whyte's intelligence, who seemed resolved to prolong to the utmost the importance which untold news gives to its possessor She however told it, at last, abruptly enough—

"So, my master is going to be married."

"Married!" almost shrieked Eda, "impossible!" she sank back, her dark countenance turning to a livid paleness with the violence of her emotion—while her companion remained absolutely awed into silence by the change in the Indian's agitated features. "Impossible," continued she in a low voice, rather as if thinking aloud, "it seems but yesterday that she

was at his side,—with her soft eyes that so watched his own,—and her sweet voice, which he never heard utter one harsh word,—and indeed who ever did? She sleeps in a cold dark vault on which her native sun looks not; had they buried her in its warm light, amid the long grass which she loved, the flowers would have grown up to hide the dark earth below. Why his heart is yet warm with the beating of her's. He cannot look in the faces of those children and not see hers; so beautiful, so young, so devoted—she cannot be so soon forgotten—it is impossible."

Little as she liked the news she told, Mrs. Whyte felt her own consequence impeached by having her authority doubted.—Diving therefore to the very depths of her pockets, she drew forth a letter: "You know," said she, "my master's hand-writing." Eda took the letter; she read the few first lines; she could read no more. The room swam around with her. The faces grew indistinct, and, staggering like one who has received a violent blow, she rose from her seat—she stood for a moment as if she knew not what she was doing,—when the voice of Mrs. Whyte recalled her to herself. Making a strong effort to command her feelings, she exclaimed, in a low broken voice, "Take care of the children," and hurried to her own chamber. Partly to divert their attention from the absence of their nurse, but still more because she found it impossible to keep her knowledge to herself—the housekeeper began to communicate

the important fact that they were going to have a mamma.

Mamma!" cried the twins in the same breath, springing from the table, "Is mamma coming back to us?" The colour glowing in their cheeks and the large tears in their eyes—with hope and eagerness—they passed close to Mrs. Whyte for her answer.

"No, poor dears, no; you are going to have a new mamma--a fine new one."

"We won't have a new mamma," exclaimed Julia. "I will have my own mamma.',

"Will is a naughty word for young ladies," said the housekeeper; "and you must be so good now; for your father, next week, will bring you a new mamma,"

"Why has he brought her?" asked Ellen.

This question somewhat puzzled Mrs. Whyte. "Because he has married her," was however her answer at last.

"And will she be called Mrs. Dalton, and live here always?" said Julia.

"Yes;—just like your mamma.

"And will she have mamma's room, and mamma's garden?"

"Yes;" said the old woman, her heart melting within her at all the recollections these words excited.

"And will she be put in mamma's picture?" and both of the children hid their faces in Mrs. Whyte's,

lap, and began to cry bitterly. Before Mrs. Whyte could explain that the picture would remain, Eda re-entered, and at once the two orphans ran towards her.

"Pray, pray, ask papa not to bring us home a new mamma, and we will be so good without her."

The sight of the children for the moment over-set all the prudent resolutions which it had cost poor Eda so much to form; her natural strong sense at once shewed her the necessity of submission, to tell the children of the event cheerfully, and to induce them to look forward to the bride's arrival as something which was to be a source of happiness, had been her immediate, and, as she thought, firm resolve; but the sudden enquiry overset her hardly acquired firmness. The sight of her tears made the twins cry half in sympathy, and half in fear; any one who has noticed may have observed that the weeping of grown up persons produces a sensation of awe on the mind of a child. Accustomed to associate the idea of superiority with that of their elders, they cannot understand their giving way to the same emotions as themselves. It must be somthing very dreadful indeed to have produced it. Eda soon recovered from her emotion, or rather soon subdued its external sings—and, taking the children on her knee, first soothed them with caresses, and then endeavoured to place the subject in its pleasantest light; she told them how kind their new mamma would be, and that she would take them to walk with her, and ask their

father to forgive them if ever he was angry. Scott beautifully says

"The tear down childhood's cheek that flows
Is like the dew drop on the rose."

So it proved to be in the present instance, and the children again took their places at the table, to Mrs. Whyte's great satisfaction, who considered seed-cake and marmalade a sovereign panacea for all the ills to which childhood is heir. Still the conversation of the evening made a deep impression on Ellen and Julia—they remembered Mrs. Whyte's "poor dears," and still more anxiously Eda's weeping. Every morning they stole into the drawing-room where it hung and watched to see if their mamma's picture was still unaltered. Finding it the same, day after day, seemed to reconcile them more than all Eda could urge to the duty which they owed to their father, and the indulgence which they were to expect from his bride. At length the important day came on which Mr. and Mrs. Dalton were expected to arrive. It was with a heavy heart that Eda prepared to dress the children. It was the first time that they had laid aside their mourning since their mother's death. The affectionate and faithful creature felt almost as much in putting on the white frocks as she had done when they first wore their black ones. She was almost angry at the pleasure which their new dresses gave the children, who admiringly surveyed their long new white sashes and shoes. Her anger had however

not to last long, for Julia suddenly put her new dress aside, and said."

"We put on our black frocks for our own mamma's memory – are we to put on our white ones to forget her for our new mamma? I won't wear them."

It now required all Eda's soothing and reasoning to induce them to put on what they had just been admiring. When they were drest, Eda saw from the flushed cheek and a little trembling hand of her beloved charges that they were over excited. Naturally delicate and timid, they were sensitive beyond their years; and anxious both for their good looks and good behavour, their nurse sent them into the garden, to gather a nosegay to give Mrs. Dalton on her arrival.

It was a lovely morning in autumn, one of those delicious days which unite the warmth of spring with the deeper and more melancholy tone of the departing year. The early flowers had long since perished. The snow-drop, crocus and epatica had led the way for the lavish profusion of the violet, the laburnum, the lilac, and the numberless roses that take so many shapes and all of them beautiful. But now the colours of the garden were at their richest—the dahlias, those magnificient strangers, spread around their oriental magnificence white, scarlet, crimson, orange, like the livery of a court, when a King assembles his nobles in the bravest attire. The geraniums too were in full blossom, and as various in kind and colour as the rose; nor was the rose herself wanting,

the delicate species called Chinese. Singular that what seems but to look at the most fragile of its kind, should yet linger to the last, and smile even amid the the snow. The children felt the influence of the soft and balmy hour. Their colour, as they wandered through the garden, became even more bright, though less feverish. The interest of their employment occupied them entirely, and exercise and sunshine made them cheerful as usual. At last the important task was completed, the rose-bud arranged with the myrtle and the geranium, and the heliotrope gave its sweet breath like incense; but some white ribbon was wanted to tie the prettily arranged bouquet, and they returned to ask Eda for some. The flowers were scarcely fastened together when the distant sound of a carriage was heard, and the nurse hurried with her charge into the hall. She was agitated herself, and this was rather increased, for she could feel the trembling of each little hand as she took them in her own.

They reached the hall, the moment before Mr. and Mrs. Dalton entered—the two children clung to Eda's gown—and with difficulty could she unloose their clasp, and make them to go forwards—for their father's first question was, "Where are Julia and Ellen?" The sound of his voice, which was very kind, re-assured them, and he himself led them blushing till the tears stood in their eyes.

"What beautiful children," exclaimed the bride as she stooped down to kiss them—obviously more care-

ful of the folds of her veil than anything else: she took the flowers without looking at them, and, taking her husband's arm, pursued her way through the hall, with a look of scrutiny and observations which would better have suited the returning mistress, careful of what might have happened in her absence, than a young bride passing a strange threshold for the firs time. The two children hung back, but Eda, in a whisper, bade them follow. She was glad that she did so, for Mr. Dalton looked round, and, seeing them beside, smiled, and bade them run before and show mamma the way to the drawing-room. The group in the hall were now left free to make thei comments, which were not of the most flattering or- der. The truth was, none of their self-love was enlisted in the favour of their new mistress; she had past on without a single kind word and look, not one old servant, and most of those at Dalton Hall had lived there for years, had received from her the slightest notice. Eda was the only one who could not be persuaded to say more than that "Mrs. Dalton was certainly very handsome:" and so she was; her figure was tall and finely proportioned, though there was a stiffness in her movements which somewhat detracted from their grace. Her features were regular, though of a kind that advancing years might render sharp, while her dark eyes, very handsome eyes they were, had every beauty of shape, colour—all but sweetness.

The children soon made their appearance in the

nursery, they said that their father's new mamma had a head-ache. Neither seemed inclined to talk about her, and Eda thought it most judicious to ask no questions. Soon after they came in, she observed that Ellen had in her hand the very flowers on whose selection so much pains had been bestowed.

"Why did you not give your mamma her pretty nosegay?" asked Eda.

"Oh, we did," replied Julia, "but she dropped it in the passage, and when we picked it up and gave it to her again, she said that she could not bear the perfume."

"We did not like it to be lost," added Ellen, "because the geranium was from our own mamma's tree."

"Some people cannot bear odours," said the nurse: "do you remember your mamma never could walk through the lime avenue in spring?"

"I wish we had not put any heliotrope," said Julia, "I dare say it was that."

Though the morning had been so fine, the afternoons were chilly, and the twins, who inherited their mother's sensitiveness to cold, drew their stools to the fire and asked Eda to tell them one of the stories of her own country. They seemed never to weary of the picturesque tales of which India is so fertile. While they were thus employed, the door opened unceremoniously, a rustle of silk was heard, and in came Mrs. Dalton. Eda of course left off speaking, and, rising from her seat, curteseyed respectfully and

remained silent and standing; the two children rose also, and stood, like their nurse in silence. Mrs. Dalton had heard the sound of talking as she came in, and immediately supposed that they had been speaking of herself: the silence on her entrance seemed very suspicious. "Pray," said she, with a sneer, "do not let me interrupt your conversation, unless, as is often the case, I am too nearly connected with it to hear it. Pray what were you talking about?" said she, turning abruptly to Julia.

"We were not talking," replied the child, answering her question in the most literal manner—"Eda was telling us about her father's elephant"—

Mrs. Dalton made no direct reply, but exclaimed, "What, a fire already!—I never heard of a fire at this time of the year. I wonder, nurse, you suffer these children to sit burning themselves up in such a manner." Eda tried to answer, but her words choaked her; and, without waiting for it, Mrs. Dalton approached the window, and threw it up, though a small drizzling rain was beating against it: at this moment the door of the nursery opened again, and a most unusual visitor, Mr. Dalton, appeared "Come here, children," said he, depositing at the same time a variety of parcels on the table, "come and look at all the playthings your mamma has brought you from London:" catching sight of Mrs. Dalton, he added, advancing towards her, "will you distribute your treasures yourself?"

"You see," said she with a smile which Eda had

not thought her face could assume. "I am beginning my acquaintance with your house betimes, you can imagine the attraction which this room possesses in my eyes." Mr. Dalton looked gratified, and proceeded to unfasten the strings of the different packages.

"Where does this draught come from?" exclaimed he suddenly; "why, Eda," looking towards the open window, "this is not like your usual care." Eda remained silent for a minute or two, but, finding her mistress did not speak, said "Mrs. Dalton opened it, I believe she found the room too warm." As if she had just recollected it, the lady looked round.

"Ah, I forgot, but you cannot think how close it was when I came in. Very unwholesome to keep a room so hot. I see you will all require a deal of reform, shall I begin with you," addressing Mr. Dalton: "but that would be saying little for my own taste, I at least cannot discover your faults."

"I am afraid you soon will," replied he, though in a tone of voice which showed the flattery had not been lost. They continued unfastening the toys, but though Mrs. Dalton was now profuse in her "loves," and "dears," it was easy to see that she sought entirely to engross her husband's attention. At last, turning the conversation from some doll's furniture to that she now saw for the first time, she expressed a wish to see the house, "This being the only room to which I could find my way by myself." Mr. Dalton

immediately proposed shewing her what rooms there yet remained day-light enough to see.

"I was going," continued she, "to petition that these dear children might accompany us, but really, after this over-heated room, it might give them cold." She left the nursery, and both Eda and the children felt the relief of her abscence. The first thing Julia did was to run and shut the window, she did it somewhat loudly and hastily, nurse saw the spirit of opposition in her act, and, calling her to her side, said gently, "Your mamma is not used to the country here, I am sure that she will wish us to have a fire, when she knows that these large and cold rooms would be very chilly without. Now show me all the beautiful play things which she has brought you." The Indian spoke cheerfully, but she did not feel as she spoke; she was too shrewd not to perceive the petty and unkind spirit of jealousy which animated Mrs. Dalton, and her heart sunk within her as she considered the influence which her new mistress would in future exercise over those who were dearer to her than her own life.

A few days passed on—and never did a few days bring about more changes. The furniture was moved the dinner-hours altered, all old habits were infringed, and, before a month was out, every servant had given warning. Mrs. Whyte was the last. "I had hoped," said she, "to have lived and died in the old house —I am sure I have done my duty by its master—but I am too old to take up with new habits, and I only

hope my mistress will be better satisfied with my successor." It might be supposed that she would, for Mrs. Dalton declared her intention of being, for the future, her own housekeeper. Mrs. Whyte's dismissal was the only one which drew a comment from Mr. Dalton. Provided no one interfered with either his library or his stable, he did not care how the rest of his establishment was managed, it being fully understood that he was to have as little trouble as was possible; but when the neat old woman, who had been "one of the old familiar faces" from his boyhood, claimed the privilege of an old servant, who had known him in his cradle, to bid him good-bye, and who could not restrain her tears when she came to say "God bless him," all Mr. Dalton's sympathies were aroused. He bade her adieu most kindly, inquired minutely about her circumstances, and even shook hands with her at parting. Nor did his kindness rest here; he immediately settled a small annuity on her, which would amply supply every comfort, during her life. Moreover, that every day after dinner, as soon as the servants were withdrawn, and Mrs. Dalton and himself quietly settled down into the arm-chairs on each side the fire, he even went so far as to say, "Do you know, my dear, I am very sorry that you have found it necessary to part with Mrs. Whyte; poor old creature, I have known her ever since I was born, and she was so attached to the family."

"I am sure, my love," replied Mrs. Dalton, in her

blandest tones, "I am very sorry, I did not know that she was so great a favourite with you—I would not have parted with her on any account; but, indeed, my dear, you have spoilt all your servants—I could do nothing with them—I shall not have half the trouble with a new set, who know my ways from the first. I am not very particular, but, I own, I know when work is well done. I used to tell you I piqued myself on my housekeeping; I kept mamma's house for her since I was sixteen." A pause ensued, and Mr. Dalton began to crack his walnut with unusual industry, and his lady continued, "I can assure you, Mrs. Whyte is not the only old servant I should rejoice to be rid of."

"There are not," replied Mr. Dalton, "many now left to interfere with your arangements."

"Why there is that tiresome old black woman."

"Eda is not black," said her husband.

"But she is as obstinate as a mule—she minds nothing that I say, he manages those children—the way in which they are spoilt is enough to ruin them: I never saw any thing so rude as they grow, and it is all Eda's fault."

"I am sorry to hear this, as they grow older I trust that they will be more amenable to your advice. But," and his brow darkened as he spoke, "the spoiling of an old woman cannot much matter, counteracted as it is by your judicious control."

"I am sure," continued the lady, "the wisest thing we could do would be to get rid of her."

"We will drop this subject once and for ever," replied her husband. "While I have a house, that house will be a home for Eda. You do not know the fidelity and devotion of that affectionate creature."

"My dear love" said his wife, "you are master in your own house. I would not for the world interfere with any of your wishes. I am very sorry I ever mentioned the subject." Here the conversation changed, Mrs. Dalton revolving in her own mind whether it would not be possible to provoke Eda into leaving of her own accord.

Julia and Ellen had that very morning given her more than usual cause of displeasure. She had early began to lay down a system of rules, as much opposed to all their old habits as could well be devised. Eda conformed in every thing, saving in one or two instances to which she knew the strength of the children was unequal, and even then she did not deviate from the rule laid down, without the most submissive remonstrance and explanation. Among other rules rigidly insisted upon was they were not to run in and outof the drawing-rooms; indeed, they were not to make their appearance there, unless they were sent for. Eda believed this prohibition was strictly observed: indeed, she secretly thought that there was too little temptation to fear that it would be neglected; but Julia and Ellen made an exception, in their own favour, for one single room, and into that they contrived to steal every morning. It was at some dis-

tance from their usual sitting-room, so their disobedience had yet remained undiscovered. It so happened that Mrs. Dalton, while receiving some visitors, happened to mention a rare plant she had noticed in the green-house. These visitors had a valuable collection of their own, and that generally gives us an interest in another's. They went to the green-house, where the gardener said it had been sent to the house and placed in the window of the blue drawing-room, as it was called. Thither Mrs. Dalton proceeded with her guests, and there she found the two children; who, hearing footsteps, endeavoured to make a rapid retreat. The window opened down to the ground, and they had come through it with all possible precaution; but, in their haste to leave the room unobserved, they threw down the stand of flowers—Ellen's frock caught on one of the pots, and Julia staid to assist her.

"As usual, those children are always in mischief," exclaimed Mrs. Dalton. "What were you doing here?" The culprits stood silent, when an old lady of the party good-naturedly came forward and said,

"I am sure they are very sorry for what they have done. Will you let me intercede for them this once?"

"Nay," said Mrs. Dalton, "I only regret that the very plant should be destroyed which you took the trouble of coming to see;" but her face contradicted her words. The party left the room, and the same lady who had interceded for them now said, "I must get acquainted with these little strangers," and,

taking a hand of each, led them forward, silent and reluctant.

"You will find them sadly troublesome," replied Mrs. Dalton, who however made no farther objection. The visit was constrained and tedious, there was a stiffness and coldness in the manners of the hostess that precluded all attempts at familiar conversation. Interested in nothing that did not immediately concern herself, she had none of that general kindliness which is so winning even in trifles. Her very politeness was chilling, for there was nothing of the heart in it. As to the children, it was impossible to extract a word from them—Mrs. Dalton muttered something about sullenness, but the old lady who had before taken their part felt tempted to say, "Why, madam, they are frightened out of their poor little wits." Lunch having been eaten and the green-house seen,—nothing now remained to supply topics of discourse or the want of them, and, after a dull quarter of an hour, the ladies rose, glad that the penance was over.

What a duty it is to cultivate a pleasant manner! how many a meeting does it make cheerful which would otherwise have been stupid and formal! We do not mean by this the mere routine of polite observance, but we mean that general cheerfulness which, like the sunshine lights up whatever it touches, that attention to others which discovers what subject is most likely to interest them, and that information which, ready for use, is easily laid under contribu-

tion by the habit of turning all resources to immediate employ. In short, a really pleasant manner grows out of benevolence, which can be as much shown in a small courtesy as in a great service. It can never be possessed by a selfish person, and Mrs. Dalton was thoroughly selfish. She had no idea that it could be a greater pleasure to give up your own comfort, or your own wishes, to those of another, than even enjoying their fullest gratification yourself. Julia and Ellen were gliding as they thought unperceived out of the room, when the harsh voice of Mrs. Dalton recalled them.

Slowly, and holding each other fast by the hand, hey approached the sofa where she was seated.

"Can't you stand upright," exclaimed she angrily, to " without leaning upon each other in that awkward way? And now perhaps you will have the goodness tell me what business you had in the drawing-room. Was this the first time?"

" No," said Julia, in an almost inaudible whisper.

" How dare you run in and out, bringing all the dirt from the garden."

" We take such care," replied Julia, who on most occasions acted as spokeswoman, " to rub our feet before we come in."

" But how dare you come in when my orders are that you should not?" To this question no answer was returned, the culprits stood pale with fear, their heads hung down and not daring even to look at each other.

"I'll make you repent this obstinacy. I insist upon knowing what you were doing there." The loud tone in which this was said admitted of no farther delay: trembling from head to foot, Julia at last answered:

"We go there every morning to see if you have been put in our mamma's picture." The fact was the children, who never rightly understood why a stranger should come in the place of their still fondly remembered parent, expected that, as every thing else had changed, the portrait would change too, and watched over it with a mixture of fear and love. Every morning they stole quietly into the room, and went happy in the conviction that the sweet face which was to their affectionate eyes such a treasure had still a smile for them. There was something in this answer that provoked Mr. Dalton to the utmost, and yet she scarcely knew how to make it a subject of reproof: catching, however, at one expression Julia had used, she retorted, "So I am not your mamma, you little ungrateful creatures. I know who taught you this; but I won't have an old black in my house much longer to make every body as insolent as herself: go along to the nursery, and, to punish you for your disobedience, you shall not come down stairs after dinner to-day." This was no longer a punishment, it was a penance, on the contrary, which they were glad to avoid. They knew that, from the time they entered, till the bell rang for "Eda to fetch the Misses Dalton," it would be an incessant repetition

of reproofs. Nothing discourages a child so much as the impossibility of pleasing. At first Julia and Ellen held up their heads, and altered their position every second minute, but it was in vain. They grew careless at last, and, not loving Mrs. Dalton, became indifferent whether they pleased her or not.

In the meantime their father found all this very tiresome; and, too indolent to examine who was in fault, satisfied himself with repeating, what his wife so often asserted. "that all children were plagues when come to a certain age." He only hoped that this age would soon be past, and in the meantime only suppose that his own had more than ordinary allotment of wearisomeness and stupidity. The fact was that they scarcely dared to speak, or raise their eyes, during the brief visit which they paid to the dining-room. He was little aware of the system of minute tyrany which his wife pursued. Not that she was cruel, or intended any positive injury; but she was harsh, selfish, delighted in a system of punishment and restraint, while she considered the luckless orphans as intruders on her rights, and, as such, to be regarded with an unkindly and perpetual jealousy; she interfered with all their childish enjoyements; they were forbidden two thirds of their old accustomed walks, indeed any where there was a chance of their meeting their father. The little poney carriage, in which they used to drive, was pronounced an unnecessary expense, and, though the children required air, they were not equal to much exercise. Their dinners, on the pre-

tence of regimen, were reduced to the coarsest material, and they were possessed of that delicate appetite very different from the healthy hunger which usually belongs to their age.

But the worst was the perpetual fear in which they lived; they would start and turn pale at the opening of a door, lest they should see Mrs. Dalton, and some slight fault be followed by punishment far beyond the offence. Hours of solitary imprisonment were a usual infliction, when they were left to brood over the assurance of their own extreme wickedness. Eda saw with bitter regret that their spirits were quite broken, and that they were gradually confounding all ideas of right and wrong. Reverence to a parent is a child's first duty, and a parent's approbation is a child's sweetest reward. But how could she inculcate duty where it was utterly undeserved, and how hold forth that approbation which no exertion could gain? As to herself, nothing but the most devoted affection could have induced the faithful Indian to have remained under Mrs. Dalton's roof. Her mistress never spoke to her but with some paltry taunt reflecting on her country or her complexion. Her fellow servants, encouraged by such example, were insolent and unkind; every comfort due to her age and situation was with-drawn and she had a yet keener source of suffering in the condition of those who were far dearer to her than herself. But for their sakes she would have borne even to death—for their sakes she endured contumely and privation—for

their sakes she curbed a temper naturally warm—lest one disrespectful word should give her mistress a hold against her. She knew that while she remained in that house— now so little of a home to any of them, the orphans had still one tender friend, one to watch their sickness, to hear their little griefs, and console them as far as pity could console. She could talk to them of their own mother—she could teach them to pray, and, young as they were, their sweetest hopes were garnered in that world which is beyond the grave.

Evening after evening, when secure from Mrs. Dalton's entrance, as she was then generally engaged with her guests below, the children would take their seats at Eda's feet, and listen while she read aloud, from the large old Bible, such portions as were adapted to their infant minds. "Suffer ye little children to come unto me," were the latest words that they heard at night, and the hope which lingered the last around their often restless pillow. All Mrs. Dalton's efforts to dislodge the tiresome old Indian were in vain. Direct dismissal she knew that her husband would not suffer, and all indirect attempts were counteracted by what might truly be called Eda's patience and long suffering. But the scene of the morning had furnished Mrs. Dalton with an excuse for an attempt to carry a plan into execution which she had long revolved. After dinner, when Mr. Dalton enquired why the children did not make their usual ap-

pearance, his lady at once replied "that they were in disgrace."

"Pshaw," replied Mr. Dalton, "no great matter, I dare say: come, let them be forgiven, and I will ring the bell for them."

"Will you pardon my opposing your wishes for once?" said she. "I do not often interfere with the management of the children. I feel how delicately I am situated, but really I fear I have been wrong. They are sadly neglected, left entirely as they are under Eda's charge; they are getting too old for the nursery." This was a fact which Mr. Dalton could not deny, though he had never given it a moment's consideration before.

"Those dear children," continued she in the blandest tone possible, "ought to have some education; or do you mean that they should run wild about the country, as they do now, when they are grown up?"

"Certainly," answered the gentleman, "they do need instruction."

"And restraint still more. I cannot tell you this morning how shocked I was when Mrs. Dalrymple was calling here, (you have yourself often observed what elegant girls her daughters are), to have Julia and Ellen scampering in at the drawing-room windows, covered with dirt, and throwing down the flower-stand where was the very plant which Mrs. Dalrymple had gone there to see." This narration touched Mr. Dalton on the tenderest point: he had the greatest horror of noise or any thing like romp-

ing in a girl. A woman, in his idea, could not be too quiet; and this riotous conduct in Ellen and Julia was at complete variance with all his notion of feminine delicacy. He instantly became alarmed as to what they would be as they grew up, and two loud, awkward, vulgar looking girls rose to his mind's eye. "You are right, my dear," exclaimed he, after a pause, "Eda is a faithful and affectionate creature, but certainly quite unfit to educate my daughters; something must be done, suppose we have a governess."

"Your plan," returned Mrs. Dalton, "would be excellent, were the acquisition of accomplishment all we had in view: but I fear the first object must be to break the dear children of many, I must say, the very many, bad habits in which they have been indulged."

"Send them to school," said her husband.

"I have thought of that myself, but am not altogether satisfied with the plan: are you at leisure to hear a little idea of my own?" Mr. Dalton knew by experience these "little ideas" took up a considerable time in developing, and he usually listened in abstraction rather than patience, but he was too much interested in the subject not to be a most attentive auditor; and, though he could sometimes have spared their exercise, he had a high idea of his wife's abilities.

"I take great blame to myself," said Mrs. Dalton.

"I really do not know for what," interrupted her husband.

"You are very kind to say so," replied she; "but I do blame myself very much, I have allowed a false delicacy to carry me too far. I ought to have interfered more than I have done hitherto. I ought not to have allowed the dread of any invidious construction to interfere with what I knew to be right. Eda is, as you truly say, a good, faithful creature, but ignorant and prejudiced to the last degree; I can forgive her dislike to myself, however unjust, but I now regret that I have allowed her to influence the children as it has done; I do not often complain, but I cannot tell you how it hurt me this morning when the children told me, "Indeed I was not their own mamma." But it is foolish to plague you with these trifles."

"What nonsense of Eda," exclaimed Mr. Dalton, "to put any such fancy in the children's heads."

"But," said his wife, "to go on with my plan: I propose that Julia should be sent to school; it is best that they should be seperated for a time, for they encourage each other in all sorts of mischief; and yet I wish Ellen, who is far the most delicate of the two, to remain at home."

"You think then that Julia's health is good," asked Mr. Dalton, with marked anxiety.

"Indeed I do, she is a little strong, daring thing, and a school will be useful to her in every point of view."

"And Ellen, shall we have a governess for her?"

"By your leave, no, I wish her to be my pupil. I shall henceforth devote a portion of every morning to her education: I usued to be considered tolerably accomplished, and, if at the end of six months she does not improve as I expect, we can then decide on her accompanying her sister to school next halt year?"

"I do not see a single objection to what you propose, we will drive over to Mrs. Dalrymple's to-morrow; I know that her daughters were all educated at the same school, and she can answer all our enquires." This was proceeding rather more rapidly than Mrs. Dalton intended: she would have liked to have chosen the school herself: for Mrs. Dalrymple's advice to be taken interfered with her own love of patronage; moreover she feared that in the course of the conversation a different version of the morning's adventure might come out, and a different view be taken of the children's conduct to what she had given. Still one great point was gained, in Mr. Dalton consenting to a school at all: she therefore trusted to her own dexterity in guiding the morrow's discourse; and she knew her husband well enough to know that though he rarely interfered, yet he equally rarely departed from a resolution when once formed.

The next day they drove to Mrs. Dalrymple's. A winding road, through a small plantation of young limes, led them to the house, a light modern building rather convenient than large. The portico was filled

with plants, whose graceful arrangement bespoke that fine taste and eye for blended colours which shows that the task has been a pleasure. I believe the love of flowers to be as inherent in the disposition as any other inclination. Nothing could be more cheerful than the sitting-room into which they were shown. Mrs. Dalrymple was surrounded by her youngest daughters and eldest grand-children, all employed, down to the little creature who sat at her feet engaged with a box of ivory letters. Conversation was soon begun and easily maintained, for though quiet and rather retiring, there was a general ease of manner, as by a look or a kind word, Mrs. Dalrymple was always ready to encourage the modest question or intelligent remark of the young people around her.

Mr. Dalton, intelligent though reserved, appreciated the graceful and interesting circle, and grew the more anxious to consult Mrs. Dalrymple. He was too full of the subject to take an interest in any other, and, after the first general topics were discussed, he said that he should take the liberty of an old friend, and mention the object of their visit. Mrs. Dalrymple had both heard more and seen more than would have pleased Mrs. Dalton, but she was too judicious to hazard making matters worse by fruitless interference. Experience had long since taught her that a stranger rarely did any good in family affairs, but, now that her opinion was asked, and her advice likely to be followed, she at once saw how much she might

benefit the twins, who had interested her exceedingly. Any home was better than their own, and if she could promote their being placed under Mrs. Wilson's charge, she knew they were sure both of instruction and kindness: she did not therefore content herself with expressing merely her warm approbation of the establishment, but she entered at length into her reasons for so doing, she gave the most minute details, and ended by saying, "I do not so strongly recommend Mrs. Wilson's on the usual advertising terms because 'the house is in an airy situation, or, is attended by the best masters,' but because I know Mrs. Wilson's worth and kind-heartedness. Her being beloved, as she is, by her former scholars, is the highest praise that I can bestow."

Both Mr. and Mrs Dalton went home perfectly satisfied. He quite persuaded that a few years would make his daughters as highly accomplished and as graceful as the Misses Dalrymple, while Mrs. Dalton congratulated herself on the success of her scheme; and the morning's visit had led to no unpleasant suspicions in her husband's mind, as to whether her disinterested attachment to the twins was quite so genuine as she wished him to believe. All was settled during their drive home. Mrs. Dalton was going to town the end of the week, and Julia was to accompany her. "Ellen," said she, "will not like being left behind, we must think of something to console her." That day after dinner, Mr. Dalton first divid-

ed some preserve between Julia and Ellen, though his wife observed "that an apple would be much more wholesome," and while the fruit was eating he said "We have been seeing some such nice little girls to-day. One of them is not so tall as you,Ellen, and she can play very prettily on the piano. Should not you like to play too?"

"Oh, yes," exclaimed both the children in a breath.

"You are growing great girls now, and you must not be idle all day; you have a great deal to learn before you."

"We like to learn," said Julia, encouraged by her father's manner, "we say our lessons to Eda every day."

Mr. Dalton smiled, and added, "But young ladies have a great deal more to learn than poor Eda can teach them. Would you not like to have some young friends, and to know how to dance, and to paint pictures?"

"Yes," exclaimed Julia colouring with delight.

"You are a good girl," replied her father, "and deserve to go to school. You shall go there next week, and learn to do so many pretty things."

"Will Eda go with us?" asked Ellen.

"No," replied Mrs, Dalton, "she is to stay at home to take care of you."

"Am I not going to school?" said the child in a faltering voice.

"No, you are to stay at home," answered her

father, "with mamma and me: your mamma is going to teach you herself to play on the piano in the drawing-room." The children became silent, at once; their little hearts were too full to speak, the large tears swelled in their eyes, but they were afraid to shed them.

"Don't cry," said Mr. Dalton, "you are too old to be babies now, go and tell Eda the good news of how cleaver you are soon to be."

"I thought," observed Mrs. Dalton, as they left the room, "that Ellen would not like to stay at home."

"It is very natural," replied her husband, "she and her sister have never been parted before—Perhaps it would be best to let both go to school."

"Nay, nay," she exclaimed, "I will not be robbed of my little pupil: you know, my dear, you are always out in the morning, and Ellen's education will fill up my solitary hours: besides, she is not strong enough for school." No more was said, and early the next morning Mr. Dalton set off to a distant part of the country whence he was to join his wife in London. The two children had hurried to the nursery, and, throwing themselves at Eda's feet, and hiding their faces in her lap, gave way to the tears they had with such difficulty suppressed. It was long before their nurse could learn the cause of such passionate grief; at last, she distinguished the broken words of "going to school." "And is that all," exclaimed she, "why you ought to be glad—you will learn so many

things that you ought to know: do you remember how your poor mother used to play, and how you used to sit beside the piano? I am sure you will be such good children, and when you come back you will have so many things to tell us,"

"Ah but," replied Julia, in a voice choaked with sobs, "I am going without Ellen."

"I am to stay," continued Ellen, in an equally inaudible tone, "at home, for our new Mamma to teach." For once, Eda had not a word to say. She clasped the children in her arms, and, unable to conceal her emotion, wept over them bitterly. She knew the devoted affection of the twins to each other, and to part them seemed refinement in cruelty. As to Ellen, she trembled to think of the teaching in preparation. It was dreadful to think how her poor spirit would be cheeked, and her young temper embittered by the perpetual harshness and undue expectations of Mrs. Dalton. Julia might do well, she was a quick and cleaver child, while her generous and affectionate temper would surely win its own way, and make friends for itself. But poor Ellen, whatever she did, would be sure to be wrong: Mrs. Dalton had no kindness in her nature, fault-finding was the very element in which she lived, and the child was so timid that reproof incapacitated her from exertion. Eda, saving when she lost the mistress whom she loved as her child, had never felt a keener pang—still she felt that her indulgence in sorrow rather added to the mischief. The sight of her grief

increased that of the twins, and, what was worse, made them think it right to indulge in complaints.

"I am a foolish old woman," said she at last, "to cry, when I ought to be glad." The word glad choaked her as she said it—and she paused for a moment, but Eda had a strength of mind and an uprightness of principle that would have done honour to any state, or any education. She saw that in the present instance it was at once a kindness and a duty to encourage them as much as possible. It was a hard task—but at least it should not want her affectionate efforts. "Surely, Ellen," continued she, "my darling does not cry because she is to stay and take care of her poor old nurse!" The child raised her head, and, clasping her arms round her neck, tried to speak, but could only kiss her, and sob out some inarticulate words. Still after a little time Eda soothed them into composure sufficient for attention. To Julia she dwelt on the advantages of going to school. "Why you will be able to teach your sister when you come home;" while to Ellen she rather talked of herself. "I could not bear to loose both of you at once—I know the time must come."

"No, no," interrupted the children, "when we are grown up, you shall always live with us."

"But it is a long time till then," continued Eda, "and many things may happen. Both of you may go to school next year, I shall be used to be alone by that time; but I could not have parted with you both at once—Ellen must try and attend to what her Mam-

ma tells her." A deep sigh was the child's only answer; and their nurse went on trying to look forward and to anticipate their next meeting. They went to bed, but when Eda leant over their pillow, the last thing at night, she saw, from the yet glittering eye-lash, and the feverish cheek, that they had cried themselves to sleep—often and often, during the following days, did the tears start into her own eyes to see how the children clung to each other—Ellen seemed afraid to lose sight of Julia for one moment; and Julia, generally the most active of the two, could scarcely be prevailed upon to move, if thereby she loosed hold of her sister's hand.

The evening of the last day came—It was in June, and the weather had been unusually hot:—to go out during the morning had been impossible; but the children had been anxiously awaiting the cooler afternoon to visit, for the last time, all their favourite haunts. The long shadows were now resting on the park, and those red hues were beginning to gather on the clouds which so soon flush into crimson and as soon fade. Scarcely had they set out, before a message came from Mrs. Dalton, who had seen them from the window, and had sent for them. She wished, she said, to give Julia some advice about her behaviour at school. Alas, for the weary hours now passed on two small upright chairs, listening to a succession of reproofs: "As to Julia, I am sure, if I were her, I should be ashamed of going to school such a dunce—the youngest child in it will laugh at her. I

expect that you will pass the next half-year in the corner, with a foolscap on. You will find it very different to being spoilt, as you are at home: I shall have trouble enough with Ellen. Are you dumb, child? Though, I believe you can find your tongue fast enough when you are with servants." At last, quite tired out, and taking a sort of courage from despair, Julia asked if they might go and finish their walk, and bid goodbye to Mrs. Whyte? The old housekeeper lived now in the village.

"I will have nothing of the kind," cried Mrs. Dalton, "you have enough to do with servants in the house, without going out in search of them; and as to Julia, going walking herself to death, I will not hear of it. Terrible as it is, you will have to pass the whole evening quietly with me." And the whole evening did she keep the two poor children seated, without the least employ or amusement till an hour considerably past their usual time of going to bed pale and tired enough: when at length she allowed them to leave the apartment. Such was Mrs. Dalton's character—unkind, selfish and tyrannical: she delighted in the exercise of petty authority. How many children, discontented with the exercise of needful authority, might learn submission and thankfulness from the lot of others; such a temper as that we have been describing is very uncommon; the treatment of children oftener errs on the side of over-indulgence than aught else. How many might be taught better to appreciate the blessings which surround them by

considering what some, less fortunate than themselves, are called upon to endure! Weary as they were, before they retired to rest, the twins resolved to rise early the following morning, and to take their purposed walk. "I shall not be able to go as far as Mrs. Whyte's, but Ellen will carry her my good-bye and the needle book which I have worked her. We can go and see the poor old pond and the lime-walk." Eda, though she resolved not to rouse the children, tired as they seemed, if they should be sleeping in the morning, made no opposition to the scheme.

Too excited for sleep, they rose almost with the sun, and hurried to take their farewell walk. How many an old tree did they linger beside, like a familiar friend! What handfuls of flowers were gathered in a spirit of the tenderest remembrance. They had no longer gardens of their own. Mrs. Dalton had chosen their little plot of ground to have some seeds, about which she was very particular, sown.—They never came up, which the old gardener said was "a judgement upon her." It must be confessed that it was a judgment originating in himself; still there was an end to the children's garden, the lady having decided that gardening was very unfit employment for young ladies, and that they were so tanned they would soon be not fit to be seen.

They had now entered the park, and, as they expected, two tame deer came up, and, gazing at them with their large eyes, waited for their portion of bread. Julia could not feed her's for the last time without cry-

ing—and Ellen cried for sympathy. "You will have to feed mine to-morrow:" and the child leant down to kiss the head of her graceful favourite. "Well," continued she, "they would miss both, they will not miss only one." The bread was soon eaten, and the deer bounded away over the dewy grass. Julia watched them till the thicket hid them from her sight, and at that moment the whole herd, bounding along —scattered the dew like light from the sparkling herbage over which they hurried. The sunshine found a mirror in every blade of lucid grass—in every leaf that hung from the boughs—one bright drop, glistening at every slender point. The branches seemed fiilled with birds singing as if in welcome to the glad morning; while the flowers around wore the fresh bright colours which they unfold to the native wind, with the sweets that night has garnered in each folded blossom. "How cheerful every thing looks," exclaimed Julia: "just as if I were not going away!" Poor child, she and her sister walked on hand in hand, casting sorrowful looks at the shining leaves, and the sweet flowers, which had so long been their companions. To their young eyes a shadow rested on all they saw, they were now learning the bitter lesson how the little world of the human heart gives its own likeness to the vast universe of which it is but an atom.

But the long shadows of the early morning began to shorten, and the children, hurrying to an old sundial that stood beside the lake in the park, saw that

it was time to return home. They only staid to give the remainder of the bread to the swans that came sweeping over the bright expanse at their approach. "Good bye," again exclaimed Julia in a scarcely audible whisper, and snatching her sister's hand, they ran in silence to the house. Eda and breakfast were waiting for them, but the hearts of all were too full to eat. The nurse was the only one who attempted to speak cheerfully, but, at last, even her voice failed. They heard the carriage come round to the door, and all started up from the untasted meal; a few minutes were given to the bustle of preparation, when Eda having taken care that there should not be a moment's delay to irritate Mrs. Dalton, took Julia on her knee, and said, in an earnest and, at first, a calm voice, "You are going away, my own darling child, going, I trust in God, for your own good; you will have to learn many things which your poor Eda could not teach you. But you will not forget what she has taught you, to be a good child, always to speak the truth, and when you say your prayers at night, think if you deserve to pray for your sister. God bless you, my dearest, God bless you:" and she kissed the weeping child, her tears fast mingling with those which Julia was shedding. "Dry your eyes, my own darling," exclaimed Eda, for at that moment a servant announced "that the carriage was ready."

Eda led the two children into the hall, which Mrs. Dalton had just entered. "What a figure," she said, in a harsh tone, "those children have made

themselves with crying: there, good by, I can't be kept waiting all day." She stepped into the carriage. "Keep this for my sake," whispered her nurse, as she gave Julia a little book. Still the children clung together, and Eda was herself obliged to part their hands and lift Julia into her place by Mrs. Dalton's side. They drove rapidly off, and perhaps the journey may be best summed up by the account which the lady's maid gave of it. "That truly her mistress was enough to plague the very life out of the poor little patient creature, who scarce ever opened her lips."

The day after their arrival in London, Mrs. Dalton took Julia to school. Mrs. Wilson lived at Richmond, one of those large old houses which look at once airy and substantial. The garden, towards the lonely and sheltered road, was small, but through the iron railings were visible two neatly kept beds of annual flowers embedded in turf of emerald green. The hall, with its large oaken staircase, opened into another garden apparently of considerable extent, and on one side was the sitting-room into which they were shewn. It was filled with the various trifles which female ingenuity creates, evincing at least an ample share of taste and industry. Now if idleness be, as the old copy-books have it, "the root of all evil," industry is no less the root of all good.

Mrs. Wilson soon made her appearance, she was a lady-like looking person, with very kind and cheerful manners. Julia was sent to see the garden, at Mrs.

Dalton's desire, who immediately addressed Mrs. Wilson on the subject: "I wished to speak to you about your pupil, for I really think it right to put you on your guard; she is a terrible naughty child, artful far beyond her years."

"And with such a sweet open countenance," exclaimed Mrs. Wilson.

"Appearances are very decitful," continued her visitor. "I really can hardly reconcil it to my conscience to leave such a torment with a stranger, but she is far beyond our management at home. I own that I have been to blame, but you can enter into my feelings, it was natural to err on the side of over indulgence." She now rose to depart, adding, "I will not ask to see Julia, for she will be sure to cry to come away with me. I therefore leave her in your good care, and only hope you will have less trouble with her than I have. No doubt school will do wonders for her."

"How unreasonable people are," thought Mrs. Wilson to herself, as she returned from the door to which she had conducted her visitor. "First, children are allowed to have their own way in every thing, reasonable or unreasonable. They are taught a thousand unnecessary wants, encouraged in a thousand foolish and injurious practices, are, in short utterly spoilt, and unused to restraint, employment, or reproof—are sent to me, indeed, expecting that "my schooll will do wanders for them." Still that little girl has such a sweet countenance, she looked so pale,

so delicate, and so gentle, that I cannot help being interested in her."

That night at supper Mrs. Wilson's first question to the teacher, under whose care Julia was more especially placed, was "What do you think of our new pupil?"

"That she is the most beautiful and quiet little creature that I ever saw. But she is sadly home-sick. We asked her if she had any sisters, and she could scarcely tell us that she had one, whose name was Ellen, for sobbing. Her only anxiety seems to be to take care of a little book—a prayer-book—which she has kept in her hand, and now has under her pillow. There is something written at the beginning, but, as she was careful of it, I asked no questions." Poor Julia! this was another night of the many during which she had cried herself to sleep. Accustomed to the quiet and seclusion of the nursery, the number of new faces frightened her. She was not used to companions of her own age, she had no amusements in common with theirs, yet they were something like Ellen—but alas they were not her.

The next day, Mrs. Wilson sent for the stranger to her own room, to judge, herself, what her small stock of acquirements might be. Julia came, one hand clasping Eda's parting gift, and the other bearing the volume in which she was to read. Pale, trembling, the tears starting from her eyes, she in vain endeavoured to answer when Mrs. Wilson addressed her. Surprised at what was even more terror than

timidity, Mrs. Wilson sought by every means to encourage her; she made her sit on a stool at her side, and only asked her a few simple questions. The fact was that Mrs. Dalton had filled the child's head with the most exaggerated ideas of what would be required of her, and of the severity which her deficiencies would inevitably provoke. What with fear and the fatigue of the journey, sorrow, want of food—for her little heart had been too full to eat, Julia was quite exhausted. Mrs. Wilson, though with some difficulty, made her take some milk which she sent for, and a piece of seed cake, and allowed her to remain unnoticed till her little visitor had somewhat recovered her spirits.

"Will you not," said her new friend, "let me see the book which you are carrying about so carefully? It is a very pretty prayer-book." Julia immediately rose and offered the volume, which Mrs. Wilson opened: on the first page there appeared some legible, but very peculiar, hand-writing, more resembling Arabic than English characters. The inscription was as follows: "To Julia Dalton, from her affectionate nurse, who hopes God will bless her, and keep her the same good girl, till she comes home again. Eda."

"Your nurse, I see," observed Mrs. Wilson, giving back the book with an encouraging smile, "gives you a good character; so we shall expect you to be very good here."

"I will try," answered Julia, lifting up her dark eyes in which the tears yet lingered.

"Then I am sure that you will succeed. Let me hear how you can read." Julia opened the volume, at first her voice faltered, but her companions re-assured her, and she read a portion with distinctness and a natural grace, and answered the few questions put afterwards in a manner that showed she quite understood what she had been reading.

"Your mamma must have taken a great deal of pains with you," observed her new instructress.

"You must now try and take pains with yourself. I am sure you love your mamma, and would wish to please her."

"I do not love her, and do not wish to please her," answered Julia.

"Fie, fie," exclaimed the governess, "you must not say so."

"Eda," replied the child, meekly, but steadily, "told me I was always to speak the truth."

"But surely you ought to love your mamma, who has taken so much trouble in teaching you to read?"

"I do not love her, for she does not love us, and she did not teach me to read."

"Who taught you to read?"

"Eda: and she taught us to say our prayers, and to pray for the new mamma; but she has not told us to love her for a long while." Mrs. Wilson at once saw that this was a case in which silence was the only resource; and telling the child that she had read

very well, sent her to water some of her favourite geraniums. "They are to be under your care, Julia, while you are a good girl."

Julia's great loveliness, for it was impossible to look upon her sweet face without pleasure, her gentle temper, and constant readiness to oblige, soon made her an universal favourite. The youngest in the school—she was the general pet—and yet so good that the care of the geraniums was never taken from her one single morning; but Mrs. Wilson observed, with regret, that the child had not spirits belonging to her age—she was always gentle and tractable; but the moment she could escape from the caresses lavished upon her, she would retreat into the darkest corner, and cry for hours together. Still she trusted that constant kindness would in time work out its effect, and that, once accustomed to the place, and interested in the pursuits allotted to her, she would grow less home-sick, and strengthen alike in mind and body.

In the meantime, Mrs. Dalton had commenced the education of Ellen—great preparations were made in the first instance: grammars catechisms, histories and geographies made easy, maps and multiplication tables, were mingled with boxes of colours, and pieces of music. Moreover, a back-board and collar, a pair of stocks, another of dumb bells, and a small upright chair, showed that the body was to be put into as much training as the mind. Every morning Ellen was to go down into Mrs. Dalton's room

and stay there till three. Day after day she used to return to the nursery, pale, spiritless, and turning with absolute loathing from the dinner which awaited her. The evenings were the long and beautiful ones in summer, but she could scarcely be prevailed on to walk. To rest her head on Eda's knee, without speaking, was all to which she seemed equal. Her kind old nurse trusted that Mrs. Dalton's taste for teaching would soon wear itself out—so it did: but not so her taste for tormenting. She liked to talk of the sacrifice she made of her mornings—of her devotion to Mr. Dalton's children—and she also liked complaining of Ellen's stupidity and obstinacy. She liked, even better than all, the petty authority which she exercised; and the unfortunate child was kept for hours in a painful and constrained attitude poring over lessons quite beyond her powers of comprehension harrassed by perpetual reproof, and encouraged by no prospect of praise or success. But all these troubles were light when weighed in the balance against the one paramount over all.

Ellen pined for her sister—she could find no pleasure in any of the employments that they were wont to pursue together. True, she went every morning, that the weather at all permitted, to feed their favourite deer, but it was a task never fulfilled without tears: she took no pleasure in any of their former amusements—a beautiful flower only drew from her the exclamation of, "I wish Julia were here to see it." She put away their playthings till Julia came

back again: and would interrupt Eda when she began to tell an interesting story—that it might be kept till Julia could hear it too. The affectionate nurse became daily more alarmed for her darling's health. True, to an indifferent observer, Ellen did not look ill:—her eyes were unnaturally bright, and the least emotion sent the rich colour into her cheek—but Eda knew those hectic symptoms only too well; it was not the first time that she had watched their deceiving progress. She knew too that the child's nights were restless and feverish, that appetite she had none, and that, when worn out by the exertion of the morning, the rest of the day was spent in a state almost amounting to stupor. One morning Ellen, after rising, was seized with a sudden faintness; and, when recovered, seemed so totally unequal to the labour of lessons, that Eda felt herself fully justified in sending an excuse to Mrs. Dalton.

The very idea of being left quiet revived her; she drew her little stool to the open window, and sat still, without desiring more enjoyment than the fresh air and the perfect quiet. About an hour had so elapsed, and Ellen was beginning to raise her lanquid head, when a step only too well known, was heard on the stairs, and the door, rudely thrown open, announced the approach of Mrs. Dalton. "Just as I thought," said she, in an angry tone, "a mere idle excuse, and Ellen is the idlest child in the world—she only wanted to waste her time in doing nothing; but for once, you will find yourself mistaken—you will have the

goodness, young lady, to come down stairs at once. I will see if I cannot find a cure for your head-ache." Ellen rose from her seat with a bewildered air, and, accustomed to implicit obedience, prepared, though with trembling steps, to follow, turning pale as death. Eda had hitherto stood by in silence. Aware of how little good her interference could effect, she always tried to avoid any ineffectual opposition that might afterwards be turned against herself; but here she could forbear no longer. Addressing Mrs. Dalton in the most respectful tone, she said, "I do not think, Madam, that you are quite aware of how ill Miss Ellen is; she has not tasted a morsel to-day."

"You are always," exclaimed Mrs. Dalton angrily, "making these children fancy themselves ill. You coddle them till they fancy they are like no one else. Come, Ellen, you have already dawdled half the morning away." The child walked a few steps feebly—and then, staggering towards Eda, sank again insensible, and would have fallen—but, that her nurse, who had seen her change countenance, was in time to catch her up in her arms. Mrs. Dalton was now thoroughly alarmed—she disliked the children from a petty jealousy—and she domineered over them from a naturally despotic temper, made worse from constant indulgence; but she did not want the common humanity which shudders at the sight of positive suffering. She rang the bell hastily for assistance, opened the window to its utmost extent, for more air, and ran herself to get salts and lavender water.

During the morning, her visits to the nursery were so frequent that Eda was forced to insist upon the necessity of keeping the patient quiet; and Mrs. Dalton acquiesced the more readily as she was somewhat recovered from her first fright, and had done enough to establish the reputation of anxiety and attention. But the misfortunes of the day were not yet at a close: while sitting after dinner with Mr. Dalton a letter was brought. She opened it and found that it came from Mrs. Wilson and the contents were as follows:

'Dear Madam.

It is with great regret that I find myself obliged to state that the health of my sweet little pupil, Julia Dalton, is such that I fear further care or attention on my part is unavailing. Her native air will I trust do much for her, and her return to the sister for whom she pines will, it appears to me, remove the greatest obstacle to her recovery. I part from the dear child with extreme pain, for a more gentle or affectionate little creature I have never known. With best compliments, I remain,

Your's very truly,

M. Wilson."

Mrs. Dalton could scarcely muster sufficient self-command to give the letter to her husband; for once, she found herself without words. Mr. Dalton read the letter without speaking—the moment it was finished he rang the bell violently.—"Order post horses

immediately," said he, in a scarcely audible voice to the servant.

"What do you intend to do?" exclaimed Mrs. Dalton, who had taken to the ordinary resource of crying, and was now seated with her face burried in her handkerchief. "I mean to go and fetch Julia without an hour's delay. I only hope that it will not be too late—I wish to God that I had never consented to part those children."

"We did it for the best," sobbed Mrs. Dalton, "but had you not better let me accompany you?"

"It would only be loss of time, I shall travel all night, and shall hope to have Julia home before the afternoon, to-morrow: you will take care of Ellen, and tell her that her sister is comming home." There was much in this arrangement that Mrs. Dalton both feared and disliked, but she saw that opposition was fruitless, and so set about making the few preparations needful with as good a grace as she could assume. The carriage soon came round to the door, and Mr. Dalton set off urging the postilions to their utmost speed. He arrived at Richmond early the following morning, sent a messenger to Mrs. Wilson, and was at the door, ready again for immediate departure, before ten o'clock. Julia was quite ready, but in spite of the flush which the hope of seeing her sister had brought to her face, her father was shocked at the alteration. At first she shrank back timidly, but the kindness of his manner brought her instantly to his knee, and she whispered an inquiry after Ellen. Mr.

Dalton was shocked to find, as he lifted her into the carriage, that she was light as a baby in his arms.

"But you do not ask how mamma is," said her father, chiefly by way of engaging her in some discourse. "I did not want to know," said Julia. He thought this reply deserved a reproof, but he had not the heart to give it to the little emaciated being whose head rested on his arm, while he held the small and feverish hand in his. During the early part of the journey—the excitement of the movement, and the joy of returning home, put Julia in a flutter of spirits that made her more than ready, eager, to talk. Her father learnt quite enough during the conversation to know why Julia did not wish to hear how her new mamma might be. Mr. Dalton listened to the sweet low voice that so artlessly confided all its small store of hopes and regrets, with a pang of bitter self-reproach. He blamed himself more than he blamed his wife, and soon, when Julia, exhausted by the over excitement, became silent, and content to look up in his face, and clasp his hand as if desirious of assuring herself that she really was with her father and returning home, then he had ample leisure for regret. He scarcely observed the road, when Julia started up with a shriek of delight, and, exclaiming, "I see them, I see them," pointed out to his attention a clump of old oaks, which, growing on an ascent in the Park, were visible at a considerable distance. But even Julia's delight was not sufficient to counter-balance the fatigue of the journey; she raised her head from

time to time to look out for familiar objects, she had not strength to sit up; a burst of gladness as they entered the avenue quite overcame her, and, when the carriage stopped, she clung with all the strength of hysterical agitation to her father, and implored him to take her at once to her nurse.

He took her in his arms, past hastily through the hall, and went direct to the nursery—Ellen was in bed, from which she sprang when she saw her sister. "I told you, I heard the carriage," and the next moment the twins were in each other's arms, and the affectionate Indian stood over them crying like a child. A loud cry from Julia, as her sister sank from her arms on the floor, was the first thing that recalled Eda to herself. She caught the child up and saw that a small stream of blood was slowly swelling from her lips, while her face was deadly pale. With that force which fear often gives, she bore her to the window, and flung open the casement. Mr. Dalton stood for a moment stupified, but catching Eda's eye, he exclaimed, "For the love of heaven, a surgeon." And he rushed at once from the room—Once, and only once, Ellen again opened her eyes—she looked anxiously round and muttered some indistinct sounds. Her sister who, from fright and fatigue, was incapable of moving—had been laid on her bed; by a mutual impulse, they again extented their arms to each other—their faces touched, and they sank, as if to sleep, but it was a sleep from which they never waked more!

Mr. Dalton, who had himself gallopped to the neighbouring town, as if life and death were indeed upon his speed, now white with agitation, entered the chamber accompanied by the medical attendant. One look was sufficient. The twins lay each in the other's arms, Julia's bright auburn hair mingling with Ellen's darker curls. The colour had left both lip and cheek, and the features, pale and sculptured, were like the marble to which Chantry imparts an existence, at once so tender, and yet so sad. The wretched father signed to the attendants to leave the room; all obeyed but one, and she was stupified with this last excess of sorrow. Mr. Dalton left the room unconscious of her presence.

A week, a dreary week, had elasped—and it was the morning of the funeral. In the very room where the young and unfortunate mother had rested in her shroud ere she was restored to Earth—were two small coffins—the lids were closed—human eye had looked its last on the mournful remains below. Yet one stood gazing upon them as if unable to tear herself away: it was the Indian nurse, in whose face that week had written death. She stood there pale, ghastly, more like a spectre than a human being, yet bound to that spot by the strong ties of earthly affection. Slowly the door opened, and Mr. Dalton entered: he started on seeing Eda, who at once came forward; and, grasping his arm with a force of which her emaciated hand might have seemed incapable, exclaimed in a hollow, yet fierce, tone:

"The lids are closed, we shall never look on those sweet faces again. Ask of your own heart if you deserve to see them—She who is now an angel in heaven spent her last breath in blessing you. Would she have so blessed you, think ye, had she known that, pass away but a few fleeting months, and another would take her place, at your side, and in your house? That her children would be given over to a stranger, till they sickened for want of those kind words which they never heard but from the mouth of the old Indian woman. Had you gone down to the grave first, would she have so forgotten your memory; would she have so deserted your children?" Mr. Dalton leant against the mantel-piece, and Eda saw a convulsion of subdued agony pass over the face, which he immediately concealed—again she laid her hand upon his arm, but this time the touch was light, and the voice was subdued and broken: "Husband of her whom I loved even as a daughter; Father of those who were even as dear; for their sakes, I would not part from you in unkindness. With these little coffins, I leave your house; and, like them, I leave it, never to return."

Mr. Dalton started at this address, and subdued his emotion by a strong effort, and, taking the aged woman's hand, kindly said: "While this house owns me for master, it is your home; and the home of none who do not treat you with kindness and with respect."

"I could not live here," exclaimed she, "the light

and the music are put away together; the few days which may yet be allotted unto me, upon this weary earth, I shall spend with *an old* servant of your own, Mrs. Whyte: her dwelling looks upon the church where"—Eda's voice became inarticulate, and an unbroken silence of some minutes ensued. Mr. Dalton then said, "At least, I can make *your old* age comfortable; this pocket-book does not even contain your due—but"—The Indian flung the offered money from her, and drawing herself up to her full height, said, with a dignity which might have belonged to the eastern queens of her line:

"Not for the wages of an hired servant have I staid in your house; nor will I take them. I owe nothing to you but the shelter of a roof which was begrudged me; and the bread which was steeped in the tears of bitterness. For the love of those who are no more, I have endured taunts, and cold looks, and harsh words:—do you think that I will be paid for them—do you think you can pay me? Let us, I pray of you, for her sake, part in kindness. Farewell, God bless you." She wrung his hand; and, before he could speak, she had left the room.—Eda never entered the house again. The twins were buried in the family vault. And the skill of the sculptor was taxed for their monument. The marble gave their likeness, as they lay folded in each other's arms, in their last pale sleep. Beautiful they looked—and sad—yet not a sadness without hope.

In the summer's heat, and in the winter's cold, came

the aged Indian woman, to weep and to pray as she knelt before the mournful statues of those who were the children of her heart. One day, they found her, in her usual attitude—her eyes fixed on the sculpture, her hands clasped, as if in earnest prayer. But the eyes were closed—and the hands rigid—God had, in his mercy, released her; and the faithful and affectionate Indian had died in the very act of praying by those whom she had loved so dearly and so well. They were going to bury her in the church-yard; but, at Mr. Dalton's command, the family vault was opened and they laid her at the feet of her mistress.

THE LITTLE BOY'S BED-TIME.

Translated from Madame Desborde Valmore.

Hush! no more fire, no noise—all round is still.
See the pale moon hath on th' horizon risen
While thou wert speaken. VICTOR HUGO.

SLEEP, little Paul, what, crying, hush! the night is very dark;
The wolves are near the rampart, the dogs begin to bark;
The bell has rung for slumber, and the guardian angel weeps
When a little child beside the hearth so late a play-time keeps.

"I will not always go to sleep, I like to watch the light
Of the fire upon my sabre, so glittering and so bright;
And I will keep the wolves at bay, if they approach the door;"
And again the little naughty one sat undrest upon the floor.

"My God! forgive the wayward child who mocks his mother's word;
Oh Thou! the long in suffering! whose wrath is slowly stirr'd;
Knowledge within the opening soul has but a feeble ray,
Wait till he knows Thy graciousness! wait till a future day.

"The little birds since set of sun are plunged in slumbers deep;
The long grass and the lonely trees are filled with them asleep;
The little birds, new from the shell, have left the topmost bough,
And 'neath the midnight's trembling shade they all are resting now.

"Closed is the dove-cot, quiet there the cooing pigeons rest,
The azure waters rock beneath the sleeping swan's white breast;
Paul, three times has the careful hen counted her brood anew;
They sleep within her sheltering wings, but, Paul, I wait for you.

"The sinking moon looks down from heaven her last farewell to take,
And, pale and angry, asks, 'Who is the child I see awake?'
Lo! there upon her cloudy bed she is already laid,
And sleeps within the circle dark of midnight's dusky shade.

"The little beggar, only he, is wandering in the street,
Poor sufferer! at such an hour, with cold and tired feet.
He wanders wearily, and hangs his little languid head;
How glad, how thankful would he be for a soft warm bed."

Then little Paul, though watching still anxious his shining sword,
Folded his clothes and laid him down without another word:
And soon his mother bent to kiss his eyelids' deep repose,
Tranquil and sweet as angel hands had bade those eyelids close.

THE SAILOR.

Now tell me of my brother,
So far away at sea;
Amid the Indian islands,
Of which you read to me.

I wish that I were with him,
Then I should see on high
The tall and stately cocoa,
That rises mid the sky.

But only round the summit
The feathery leaves are seen,
Like the plumes of some great warrior,
It spreads its shining green.

And there the flowers are brighter
Than any that I know;
And the birds have purple plumage,
And wings of crimson glow.

There grow cinnamon and spices,
And, for a mile and more,
The cool sweet gales of evening
Bring perfume from the shore.

Amid those sunny islands
His good ship has to roam:
Amid so many wonders
He must forget his home.

And yet his native valley
How fair it is to-day!
I hear the brook below us
Go singing on its way.

Amid its water lilies
He launch'd his first small boat—
He taught me how to build them,
And how to make them float.

And there too are the yew trees
From whence he cut his bow;
Mournfully are they sweeping
The long green grass below.

It is the lonly churchyard,
And many tombs are there;
On one no weeds are growing,
But many a flower is fair.

Though lovely are the countries
That lie beyond the wave,
He will not find among them
Our mother's early grave.

I fear not for the summer,
However bright it be:
My heart says that my brother
Will seek his home and me.

THE LADY MARIAN.

Her silken cloak around her thrown,
Lined with the soft brown fur,
So that no wind, howe'er it blew,
Could blow too rough on her.

The lady Marian thus went forth,
To breath the opening day;
Two snow-white ponies drew the chair
That bore her on her way.

A little page upheld the reins,
Who, drest in gold and green,
Might have seem'd fitting charioteer
To her the fairy queen.

The graceful equipage drove on,
And sought the woodland shade;
Where boughs of aspen and of birch
A pleasant shelter made.

A murmur musical and sad
Disturbed the noon-tide rest;
For balanced on each topmost branch
Hung the wood pigeons' nest

But soon amid the parting trees
There came a gladder song;
For, fill'd with music and with light,
A small brook danced along.

The small brook had a cheerful song,
But one more cheerful still,
The song of childhood in its mirth,
Came o'er its sunny rill.

Over the silvery wave which shewed
The pebbles white below,
Where cool beneath the running stream
The water-cresses grow;

A little maiden gathering them,
Bent down with natural grace;
The sunshine touch'd her auburn hair,
The rose was on her face.

A rose accustomed to the sun,
Which gave a richer hue
Than ever pale and lanquid flower
Within a hot-house knew,

Blessing the child within her heart,
Marian past thoughtfully by,
And long the child watch'd thro' the boughs,
With dark and alter'd eye.

And when the lady past again,
The brook its glad song kept;
But, leaning on its wild flower bank,
The little maiden wept.

Marian was still a child in years,
Though not a child in thought;

She paused, and with her low soft voice,
The cause for sorrow sought.

It was for envy Edith wept,
And this she shamed to say;
And it was long e'er Marian learnt
Why tears had found their way.

At last she rather guess'd than learnt,
And with a graver tone
She said, "Oh rather thank thy God,
My lot is not thine own.

"How would my weary feet rejoice
Like thine to walk and run
Over the soft and fragrant grass,
Beneath yon cheerful sun.

"And yet I trust to God's good will
My spirit is resign'd;
Though sore my sickness, it is borne
At least with patient mind.

"Though noble be my father's name,
And vast my father's wealth;
He would give all, could he but give
His only child thy health!

"Ah, judge not by the outside show
Of this world, vain and frail—"
Still wept the child; but now she wept
To watch a cheek so pale.

The lady Marian's voice grew faint,
Her hour of strength was o'er;
She whisper'd, "Come to-morrow morn,
And I will tell thee more."

Next morning Edith sought the hall;—
They shew'd her Marian laid
Upon a couch where many a year
That gentle child had pray'd.

And dark and hollow were her eyes,
Yet tenderly the while
Play'd o'er her thin white cheek and lip
A sweet and patient smile.

The shadow of the grave was nigh,
But to her face was given
A holy light from that far home
Where she was hasteningh—eaven.

It was her latest task on earth,
That work of faith and love;
She taught that village child to raise
Her youthful heart above.

She gave her sweet and humble thoughts
That make their own content;
And hopes that are the gift of heaven,
When heavenward the're bent.

And many wept above the tomb
That over Marian closed;
When in the bosom of her God
The weary soul reposed.

None wept with tenderer tears than she
  Who such vain tears had shed;
But holy was the weeping given
  To the beloved dead.

Throughout a long and happy life
  That peasant maiden kept
The lesson of that blessed hour
  When by the brook she wept.

THE PRISONER.

"Now come and see the linnet that I have caught to-day.
Its wicker cage is fastened, he cannot fly away.
All the morning I've been watching the twigs I lim'd last night
At last he perch'd upon them—he took no further flight,
I wish he would be quiet, and sit him down and sing—
You cannot see the feathers upon his dark brown wing."

He was her younger brother---she laid aside her book—
His sister with her pale soft cheek, and sweet and serious look—
"Alas," she cried, "poor prisoner, now, Henry, set him free,
His terror and his struggles I cannot bear to see."
But the eager boy stood silent, and with a darken'd brow,
Such pains as he had taken, he could not lose them now.

"Poor bird! see how he flutters! and many a broken plume
Lies scatter'd in the struggle, around his narrow room.
His wings will soon be weary, and he will pine and die
For love of the green forest, and of the clear blue sky,
We read of giants, Henry, in those old books of ours,
Would you like to be a captive within their gloomy towers?

"You said in our old ash-tree a bird had built its nest;
Perhaps this very linnet has there its place of rest.
Now who will keep his little ones when night begins to fall?
They have no other shelter, and they will perish all.
There'll be no more sweet singing within that lonely grove;
Now, Henry, free your prisoner, I pray you, for my love.

"Our father is a soldier, and in some distant war
He too might be a prisoner in foreign lands afar."
Her dark eyes filled with tear-drops, and she could say no more—
But Henry had already unbarr'd the wicker door.
He threw the window open, and placed the cage below,
And to the ash-tree coppice he watch'd the linnet go.

That evening when the sunset flung around its rosy light,
And the air was sweet with summer, and the many flowers were bright
They took their walk together, and as they past along,
They heard from that old ash-tree the linnet's pleasant song.
It was like a sweet thanksgiving; and Henry, thus spoke he,
"How glad I am, my sister, I set the linnet free."

THE

HISTORY OF MABEL DACRE'S

FIRST LESSONS.

THE

HISTORY OF MABEL DACRE'S FIRST LESSONS.

"Good-bye, my little Mabel; be a good child, and a comfort to your poor old grandfather!" So saying, Mr. Dacre put back the thick brown curls, which, to-day, a most unusual circumstance, hung over her face; and kissed her eyes, which were closed, for Mabel had resolved not to cry; still the long, dark lashes were moist with the tears they repressed.

Mabel was lifted, in silence, into the carriage, when, instantly jumping out again, she ran to her grandfather and almost sobbed, though the childish voice was steadied with a resolution which would have done honour to nineteen, instead of nine. "My dear grandfather, I did not say good-bye; I will do every thing I am told—I will be so very, very good!" and our little heroine ran back eagerly, to the carriage.

Mabel Dacre was an orphan, but utterly unsad-

dened by the memories which make the sorrow of an orphan. The darling and delight of her grandfather, she had never known a grief which had not been shared—a care which had not been soothed. Her whole life had been spent in the country, and her cheek was as red as the roses that had grown up with her, and her step as light as the wind; and, to say the truth, nearly as unchecked. Little, affectionate, kind-hearted thing! having her own way was not so bad for her as it usually is—still it was bad enough. The warm feelings, uncontrolled, had degenerated into passionate ones; the lively temper, uncurbed, was grown wayward and violent; the mind, uncultivated, became idle and vacant; and, at the age of nine, Mabel Dacre was headstrong, rude, ignorant, and awkward; in short, running as wild as any neglected shrub in the garden. Day after day was spent in scampering over the grounds, her only companion a white greyhound as wilful as herself. Companions she had few; far from neighbours of their own station, they lived at a distance; and the children of the peasantry shrank from one whom extreme indulgence had, as extreme indulgence always does, rendered selfish and overbearing, Mabel saw she was disliked, and also felt her own deficiencies; for, only last Christmas, she had been taught her first lesson, in mortification. Now, bitter, but useful, mortification is the stepping-stone to knowledge, even in a child.

Mr. Dacre had a daughter, Mrs. Harcourt, who together with a fine family, lived at a distance; but last

Christmas she and her four daughters had volunteered Mr. Dacre a visit. Mabel had been impatient for the arrival of her cousins, to a degree that had put a stop to either sleeping, eating, playing, or, indeed, any faculty but talking: she would do this, that, and the other (to use a favourite phrase of her nurse's,) when her cousins arrived. Nay, her generosity had arrived, in imagination, even to letting them have her pony—a little, rough, wild animal, which had once or twice nearly broken her neck, but was, nevertheless, a prodigious favourite. The day arrived—she was awake long before, and up as soon as, it was light, though she had been duly informed it was impossible they could arrive before evening.

Expectation makes a long day. Her poor old grandfather was worried almost out of his life, and quite out of his arm chair. First she thought dinner never would be ready, which, when it came, she was too impatient to eat. Tea was expected and passed in precisely the same manner; and, as the evening closed in, her impatience was quite unbearable. At last, to put a stop to the incessant opening and shutting the door, and the still more incessant questioning, one of the servants gave her some chesnuts to roast, and Mabel drew her stool to the fire.

A soft drizzling mist prevented the carriage from being heard as it drove up the avenue, and the bustle in the hall first announced the arrival of the visitors. Mabel threw her stool down, and her chesnuts into the fire, and flew to welcome them. A most noisy

welcome it was. Mr. Dacre thought to himself. "Five children! Why the old house will be about our ears."

"What is the matter?" said the clear cold voice of Mrs. Harcourt, as Mabel threw her arms round her second cousin's neck, and dragged her forward with an energetic hospitality worthy the feudal times. Miss Harriet was disengaged from her cousin's embrace, and Mabel shrunk back with a feeling of surprise, if not of fear.

Mrs. Harcourt proceeded towards the dinning-room, where her father was sitting, unable to move with the gout, followed, in the quietest manner possible, by her daughters. She approached Mr. Dacre, regretted that there should be such a draw-back, as the gout, to the happiness of their meeting, observed he looked well in the face, and requested permission to present the young ladies. Each severaly stepped up to their grandfather, said they were glad to see him, and presented their cheek to be kissed; princesses could not have done it with more courtesy or more coldness. Mrs. Harcourt then asked for her niece, and Mabel, for the first time in her life, felt reluctant to be noticed; she was kissed by her aunt, afterwards by her cousins; and each young lady then took a chair, where they set upright and silent, as if they had been images of good behaviour.

"As the night is so very cold, you may come a little nearer the fire," said their mother.

The four moved their chairs foward at once, and

then resumed their silence and stillness. Mabel, almost unconsciously, pushed back her stool which was drawn close to the fender. Mrs. Harcourt talked to her father, and the young ladies looked at each other, and at the stranger, slightingly enough. Mabel felt rather than saw, that the looks had more of contempt than it was quite agreeable to suppose directed to herself. She glanced at them from time to time, when she thought herself unobserved: the Misses Harcourt seemed beings of another nature; and naturally enough, exaggerating their advantages, found her self-estimate greatly lowered in the contrast. She felt a secret consciousness of being ridiculous—a fear singularly prompt to enter a childish mind; and, moreover, she was disappointed, though she knew not well how. With what joy did she hear supper announced!—and hastily assuming a seat, began to heap her cousin's plates with every delicacy in her reach. Faint "No thank you's" rewarded her trouble, when Mrs. Harcourt said, in her chilly, but dictatorial, manner, "Do you allow Miss Dacre to eat all this pastry? I never allow my daughters to touch any thing so unwholesome!" And Mabel saw, with dismay, her cousins sup upon a roast apple, a piece of bread and a glass of plain water.

Nine o'clock struck. "Young ladies, you will bid your grandfather good night."

"Mabel, love," said Mr. Dacre, "show your cousins their room."

"I thank you," interposed their mother, "but the

Misses Harcourts' maid is in attendance." The young strangers courtesied and withdrew.

It must be owned Mabel had been accustomed to loiter at her grandfather's knee, nay, even to sip out of his old-fashioned cut-glass goblet of wine and water, but to-night she disappeared as quietly and even more silently than her cousins. She left the room with an intention of visiting them, but paused from sheer timidity as she reached the door. While hesitating, she heard Miss Harriet's voice in a much louder key than was used down stairs:

"Well, did you ever see such an uncouth creature as our new cousin—dressed such a figure! Why she's a complete Hottentot!"

Mabel withdrew indignantly to her bed, and there fairly cried herself to sleep. Not, however, till she had reflected a full hour touching what "a Hottentot" could possibly be. "Give me my darkest frock," said Mabel to the old servant who dressed her. She had already contrasted her appearance with that of her guests, and, in her mind's eye, saw herself in—alas, for poor Mabel's taste! a frock of brocaded silk, where each large flower covered half a breadth; it had been a gown of her grandmother's, its gay colours had marvellously attracted her childish admiration, and she had never rested till a best frock had been made from its ample folds. Besides the hues of the rainbow in her garb, she had also decorated herself with divers strings of coloured beads and bugles, twisted about her neck and arms which eagerness

and cold had dyed a double red. Moreover, she contemplated her curled head (her hair curled naturally) with no sort of satisfaction. She recalled the strangers dressed in dark green merino frocks, up to the throat and down to the wrist; the gloves, which were almost part of the hands they covered; the neat black slipper. Mabel thought to herself; "mine were down at heel;" and then their heads, the youngest had the hair simply parted back; in the second it was allowed to curl in the neck; the third had it also curled in the front, while Miss Harcourt, the eldest, had arrived at the dignity (and an epoch it is in a young lady's life) of having her hair turned up behind, and a comb. "She is hardly three years older than I am," thought Mabel.

Mabel's step was always light, and her voice always soft, when she tripped into her grandfather's dressing-room to make her daily enquiries. To-day, her manner was more than usually subdued.

"I expect my little girl," said Mr. Dacre, "will learn a great deal from her cousins. Mrs. Harcourt, my daughter, tells me they are uncommonly forward in their education."

"Pray," said our herione, "do tell me what is meant by a Hottentot."

"They are a peculiarly hideous and brutal race of savages in Africa."

Poor Mabel asked no farther questions. Mrs. Harcourt now arrived to breakfast with her father. The young ladies had taken their's an hour before, but

just came in to wish Mr. Dacre good morning, and then departed. Mabel looked after them, and felt as if she had no right to her usual place. "Is it possible," exclaimed Mrs. Harcourt, "that you suffer Miss Dacre to have chocolate for breakfast? It is what I would not allow one of my own children to touch." To be called, "Miss Dacre," to be eating what her visiters would not be allowed to partake!—She could not swallow another spoonful. Chocolate was no indulgence to her, at all events, to-day. Mrs. Harcourt, after breakfast, proposed her niece should accompany her to what was to be the school-room. "During Miss Dormer's holidays, I take the office of governess on myself." How endless the morning seemed to Mabel!—how wearisome the various catechisms out of which they recited dates, names, &c, in the driest and the most didactic order! And as for the harp, which the eldest Miss Harcourt practised for two hours, Mabel wondered how she had ever liked music. The hours of study were succeeded by those of relaxation, and the four sisters proceeded to walk up and down the terrace in the sun; beyond this their young hostess could not allure them. All her efforts for their entertainment were equally fruitless: they screamed when her greyhound came bounding towards them; shuddered with half real, half affected, horror, when she proposed a ride on her pony; and, when she challenged her youngest cousin to a race, she was struck dumb with their answer—that such very violent exercise was only fit for boys.

But the climax of all was when Miss Elizabeth, the eldest, who drew, admired the bright red berries of a bunch of holly, and lamented that it was out of her reach. Immediately Mabel, with much good nature, and a little of the pride of usefulness, began scrambling up the tree, quite regardless of the prickly leaves, and succeeded in obtaining the desired branch; but, by the time she began her descent, the cries and ejaculations of the Misses Harcourt had brought their mother to the window, and, from the window to the terrace itself, Mabel swung by a bough to the ground, and found herself in the hwful presence of her aunt. Blushing even deeper than the crimson, which exertion had brought into her face, Mabel hesitatingly offered Elizabeth the stalk with its scarlet berries; Mrs. Harcourt, however, repulsed the proffered gift. "I can permit no daughter of mine to take what has been procured in so disgraceful a manner. Young ladies, you will return with me to the house." Poor Mabel was left standing by herself, equally dismayed and disconsolate, on the terrace. But the mortifications of the ensuing day were even more acute. It was her grandfather's birth-day, and each of the Misses Harcourt had some pretty present of their own work to offer him. The eldest brought a drawing—her latest and best performance; the second had netted him a brown silk purse; the third had embroidered a velvet case for his spectacles; and the youngest had hemmed a silk handkerchief, and neatly marked it with his name. And poor Mabel had nothing to give. Her

little heart swelled even to bursting, and she stole out of the room to hide her tears, that came thick and fast.

"Come back, my little girl," said her too indulgent grandfather.

"Excuse me," said Mrs. Hascourt, "young ladies, you may leave the room." The Misses Harcourt retired.

"A very bad sign; Miss Dacre's crying shows so much envy."

Mr. Dacre did not quite agree with his daughter, but as he had never contradicted her as a child, it was not very likely he should do so now.

"You are quite ruining poor Frederick's child: she is quite a little Hottentot!"

"Oh!" thought Mr. Dacre, "I now understand poor Mabel's question!" It is unnecessary to dwell quite as long as Mrs. Harcourt did upon Mabel's deficiences; but the result of the conversation was that with which our narrative commences, viz Mabel's going to school.

Drearily did the weeks pass with her grandfather, his existence suddenly missed its interest, and, with all her faults, Mabel was kind-hearted and most affectionate. In the meantime his grand-daughter found the novelty of her situation, at the Misses Smythes', not so pleasant as novelties generally are.

The silence, the stillness, the order, to say nothing of the lessons, were very dreadful in Mabel's eyes. Then she had the mortification of being behind-hand

with the very youngest of her companions. She had no available knowledge. True, her habit of reading aloud to her grandfather had given her a stock of information really uncommon at her age; but it was very miscellaneous, and not at all useful as regarded her present course of study. The rest of the girls, finding that at the age of ten she could do nothing more than read and write, immediately set her down for a dunce, and a new feeling, that of timidity, interfered sadly with her progress—for Mabel was really a quick child.

All beginings are very troublesome things, and such she found them. But all the early cares of education were nothing compared to her other sorrows. For the first time in her life she found herself utterly alone, an object neither of importance nor affection.

Shy, keenly alive to ridicule, and unaccustomed to girls of her own age, she experienced insuperable difficulties in the way of getting acquainted with her school fellows; they were to her strangers, if not enemies. The trees in the garden seemed her only friends; a dwarf oak was an especial favourite—it reminded her of one at the hall. Her rural tastes at last led her into a great error. The gardener, a good-natured old man, whose heart inclined to a young lady whose interest in a patch of mustard and cress seemed almost as great as his own, one unlucky morning made her a present of a wicker cage containing a young owl, and a little frightful creature it was, to be sure. Still, had it been the celebrated queen bird

of the fairy tales, it could not have been more highly valued.

In the first place, there was a mystery about keeping it, and we all know mysteries are very fascinating things. Moreover, it was something to love, and Mabel soon loved it very dearly. But, alas! the necessary feeding of an evening involved a terrible breach of school discipline. Every night, after the teachers had carried away the lights from the young ladies' room, Mabel used to slip out of her bed, steal down to the garden, and feed the owl. For nearly a week no suspicion was excited, but, one bright moonlight night, Miss Smythe, who had forgotten some order to the gardener, walked herself down to his cottage, which stood at the further extremity of the garden. As she returned, her attention was attracted to a figure in white, gliding among the trees.

"Dear, dear! What mischief is going on now!" exclaimed Miss Smythe, whom long experience had made sage. In another minute she was at the culprit's side. "Gracious goodness! she will catch her death of cold. Miss Dacre, you tiresome child, come with me into the house this minute!" In silence Miss Dacre obeyed, and in silence was put to bed again, and Miss Smythe departed with an assurance that the offence would be duly visited with punishment the next day. Every variety of punishment visited Mabel's sleep that night. The next day she passed in solitary confinement.

"Not so much," said Miss Smythe, "for keeping

the bird—that I might have permitted—but for the deception of the concealment." It made Mabel's sorrows more acute to know herself how improperly she had acted. The day after she was seriously ill with a sore throat, and cough, and had to get well on the cold comfort that it was entirely her own fault. Gradually, however, she was becoming more popular with her schooll-fellows. The first fortnight had taught the useful lesson that she was of no consequence, the second brought with it the want of friends, and the third, the wish to acquire them. She soon saw that she must put herself out of the way for the sake of others, and that kindness must be reciprocal: now, she was not naturally selfish, and its acquired habit soon wore off. From one extreme she ran into another, and the desire of popularity became an absolute passion. Her injudicious desire of obliging, right or wrong, led her into continual scrapes. The last was the worst. There was an old woman who was allowed, once a week, to supply the school with cakes, fruit, &c.; but, besides this regular commerce, unhappily a good deal of smuggling went on, and divers sweet things entered the house unknown to the Misses Smythes. One evening, Mabel's ingenuity had been exerted in procuring a cherry pie, for which her purse also had paid. As soon as the teachers had gone their usual rounds, and descended to supper, the pupils prepared to eat their pie, for which the long summer evening afforded ample light: the road to the mouth is a very obvious one. Suddenly a staid and well-

known step was heard on the stairs. It was that of the younger Miss Smythe, "What shall we do with the pie?"

"Put it on the top of the bed," said one of the girls. Mabel jumped up, placed it rapidly on the bed head, and when Miss Smythe entered, all was seeming sleep and quiet. Her unexpected visit turned out to be one of great length: a press stood in the room, and its whole contents that night were put to rights. All were too sleepy when their governess departed to even think of the pie.

The next morning, an exclamation of horror from Mabel awoke all the girls. The pie, turned upside down in the scuffle, had let all its juice run through on the bed—the pretty French bed, white as snow, on which the Misses Smythes so prided themselves—the furniture was utterly spoiled. In the midst of their dismay, and their unkindly reproaches to Mabel, who was called "such a stupid awkward thing," one of the teachers entered, The alarm was given, and Miss Smythe's anger at its height. The next day, when Mr. Dacre called to take Mabel home for the holidays, he was told that his grandaughter was quite incorrigible, and really required severer discipline than was practised at the Misses Smythes' establishment. Mabel came there weeping, and so she left it. But her sorrow yet admitted of augmentation.

Mrs. Harcourt and daughters were coming to the hall. They arrived fully aware of why their cousin had left the Misses Smythes. The next morning,

Mrs. Harcourt said, in her most ungracious manner, "Young ladies, I permit you still to offer Miss Dacre the presents you have brought her, though I fear, from what I hear, they will be of little use." It must be owned, the presents themselves were unreasonable enough, if six months at school were held sufficient to ensure their being a benefit. The eldest gave her a piece of music, scientific enough to have puzzled an advanced performer; the second gave her a box of colours (for drawing Mabel had not the least taste;) the third, a volume of erudite patterns for lace, bead, and other work; and the youngest presented her with an elegantly bound French treatise on Botany, not a word of which she could read, Alas, poor Mabel! Two days (but they were very long ones) only Mrs Harcourt stay. After her departure it was gradually discovered that, softened and subdued, Mabel was much improved by her having been at school. But a second absence from home was preparing for her. Mrs. Harcourt staid two days again on her way home. She had heard of a first-rate school; Mabel's deficiencies were sedulously brought forward; and Mr. Dacre again convinced of the propriety of a remedy.

This time Mrs. Harcourt herself consigned her to the care of Mrs. Weston, certainly with a very unflattered character. Depressed at parting with her grandfather, mortified by her aunt, and remembering the ill success of her first trial, Mabel sat and cried in the window seat. The first week was very miserable. Embarrassed by so many strangers, hopeless

with observing so much of accomplishment, Mabel was in a state of depression that any person less in the habit of making allowance than Mrs. Weston would have taken for absolute sullenness.

One morning, while gazing sorrowfully on the parapet, and thinking how melancholy a window was that only looked to the tops of houses, she observed something dark on the wall. She opened the casement, and saw that it was a robin, lying apparently dead, A robin! it was like an old friend: forgetting all the trouble of which her last bird had been the cause, Mabel caught it up and found that it still showed faint signs of life. She wrapped it up in a handkerchief, and, putting it in her work-basket, hurried down stairs, with the intention of trying to relieve it with warm milk at breakfast. Previous to this there were some lessons to be said; and, while they were in progress, the robin, re-animated by the warmth, escaped from the basket. No slight confusion ensued, and, in her hurry to secure the captive, which only fluttered very faintly, Mabel threw down a form. Of course an enquiry was made as to what caused the noise, and our herione was brought, bird in hand, to Mrs. Weston. To Mabel's extreme surprise, she met with no reprimand, but praise for her humanity, and Mrs. Weston herself helped to revive the poor bird. It was a tame one, and Mabel's delight and gratitude were unbounded on being permitted to keep it.

The system of kindness thus begun was most ra-

pidly pursued; our heroine now descarded from her mind the belief that it was quite in vain for her to attempt to do any thing; she found that inclination and ability went hand in hand. Mrs. Weston easily saw that Mabel Dacre had been at once over indulged, and yet over blamed; and that, while there were in her character the elements of much good, they were yet of a kind that were the soonest turned to evil. She was therefore repressed, but not discouraged; and industry gradually became an enjoyment, and order a habit.

But, at the end of the first six months, a heavy disappointment awaited her. Mr. Dacre had written to say he would fetch her the following week; but, alas! that week only brought a letter from Mrs. Harcourt, saying that her father had been very ill, and that she had prevailed on him to accompany the family to Bath. Miss Dacre would, therefore, remain at school during the holidays. Poor Mabel! Perhaps, however, this very untoward circumstance proved one of the most fortunate events in her life. Being the only young person left during the holidays under Mrs. Weston's care, much attention was directed to a disposition that well repaid the cultivation. Mabel was conversed with as a sensible and a responsible being, and her naturally affectionate temper called into action by the discovery that she was really liked for herself. School met again, and Mabel was among the most gentle and the most assiduous. Christmas came at last, and with it her

grandfather. Mabel cried for joy as she threw herself into his arms; and Mr. Dacre could hardly believe that the tall, elegant girl, who had prizes in every one of her studies to exhibit, could be the little, rude, ignorant Mabel. The pain of parting with Mrs. Weston was the only drawback to her content. It may be doubted whether Mrs. Harcourt was quite so delighted with Miss Dacre's improvement; and the accomplishments of her daughters were brought more sedulously forward than ever. Perhaps the secret why Mabel's little stock were so much more efficient, in her grandfather's eyes at least, was that her cousins' were produced in display, and her's from affection.

Early lessons are invaluable ones, and Mabel never forgot her first experiences. Out of mortification grew the desire of improvement; and the desire of amendment soon produced its effect. All the better qualities of her nature were now called into action by Mr. Weston's judicious kindness. Frank, kind, and affectionate, at sixteen—when Mabel Dacre was the constant comfort and companion of her grandfather—feeling within herself at once the desire and capability of excellence; feeling, too, all the happiness both to itself and others which a well regulated disposition and a cultivated mind is capable of diffusing—Mabel often said, laughing, "I used to call Mrs. Harcourt my evil, but I ought to have called her my good, genius."

THE DEAD ROBIN.

"It is dead—it is dead—it will wake no more
With the earliest light, as it wak'd before—
And singing, as if it were glad to wake,
And wanted our longer sleep to break;
We found it a little unfledg'd thing,
With no plume to smooth and no voice to sing;
The father and mother both were gone,
And the callow nurseling left alone.

"For a wind, as fierce as those from the sea,
Had broken the boughs of the apple tree:
The scattered leaves lay thick on the ground,
And among them the nest and the bird we found
We warm'd it, and fed it, and made it a nest
Of Indian cotton, and watch'd its rest;
Its feathers grew soft, and its wings grew strong,
And happy it seemed as the day was long.

"Do you remember its large dark eye,
How it brightened, when one of us came nigh?
How it would stretch its throat and sing,
And beat the osier cage with its wing,
Till we let it forth, and it perched on our hand—
It needed not hood, nor silken band,
Like the falcons we read of, in days gone by,
Linked to the wrist lest away they should fly.

"But our bird knew not of the free blue air,
He had lived in his cage, and his home was there:
No flight had he in the green wood flown—
He pined not for freedom he never had known!
If he had lived amid leaf and bough
It had been cruel to fetter him now;
For I have seen a poor bird die,
And all for love of his native sky.

"But our's would come to our cup and sip,
And peck the sugar away from our lip—
Would sit on our shoulder and sing, then creep
And nestle in our hands to sleep:
There is the water, and there is the seed—
Its cage hung round with the green chickweed;
But the food is untouched—the song is unheard—
Cold and stiff lies our beautiful bird."

THE SOLDIER'S HOME.

Thus spoke the aged wanderer,
A kind old man was he,
Smoothing the fair child's golden hair
Who sat upon his knee:—

"'Tis now some fifteen years, or more,
Since to your town I came:
And, though a stranger, made my home
Where no one knew my name.

"I did not seek your pleasant woods,
Where the green linnets sing—
Nor yet your meadows, for the sake
Of any living thing.

"For fairer is the little town,
And brighter is the tide,
And pleasanter the woods that hang
My native river's side.

"Or such, at least, they seemed to me—
I spent my boyhood there;
And memory, in looking back,
Makes every thing more fair.

"But half a century has past
Since last I saw their face:
God hath appointed me, at length,
Another resting-place

"I have gone east—I have gone west:
I served in that brave band
Which fought beneath the pyramids,
In Egypt's ancient land.

"I saw the Nile swell o'er its banks
And bury all around;
And when it ebbed, the fertile land
Was like fair garden ground.*

"I saw the golden Ganges, next,
No meadow is so green
As the bright fields of verdant rice
Beside its waters seen.

"There grows the mournful peepul tree, †
Whose boughs are scattered o'er
The door-way of the warrior's house,
When he returns no more.

"I followed where our colours led,
In many a hard-won day;
From ocean to the Pyrenees,
Old England fought her way.

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*Not a traveller but alludes to the beautiful appearance of the country when the annual overflowing of the Nile, in Egypt, has subsided. Many use the very expression in the text, that it is "like a fair garden."

† It is a custom with some of the Hindoo tribes to strew branches of the peepul tree before the door when the chief of the house has fallen in battle.

"I had a young companion then—
My own, my only child!—
The darkest watch, the longest march,
His laugh and song beguil'd.

"He was as cheerful as the lark
That singeth in the sky;
His comrades gladdened on their way,
Whene'er his step drew nigh.

"But he was wounded, and was sent
To join a homeward band:
Thank God, he drew his latest breath
Within his native land.

"I shared in all our victories,
But sad they were to me;
I only saw the one pale face
That was beyond the sea.

"Peace came at last, and I was sent,
With many more, to roam;
There were glad partings then, for most
Had some accustomed home.

"I took my medal, and with that
I crost the salt sea wave;
Others might seek their native vales,
I only sought a grave.

"I knew that, on his homeward march
My gallant boy had died;
I knew that he had found a grave
By yonder river's side.

"The summer sun-set, soft and warm,
Seemed as it blest the sleep
Of that low grave, which held my child,
O'er which I longed to weep.

"The aged yew-trees' sweeping boughs
A solemn shadow spread;
And many a growth of early flowers
Their soothing fragrance shed.

"But there were weeds upon his grave:
None watch'd the stranger's tomb,
And bade, amid its long green grass,
The spring's sweet children bloom.

"You know the spot—our old church yard
Has no such grave beside;
The primrose and the violet
There blossom in their pride.

"It is my only task on earth—
It is my only joy,
To keep, throughout the seasons fair,
The green sod of my boy.

"Nor kin nor kindness have I lacked,
All here have been my friends;
And, with a blessing at its close,
My lengthened wayfare ends.

"And now my little Edward knows
The cause why here I dwell;
And how I trust to have my grave
By his I love so well."

THE INDIAN ISLAND.

THE INDIAN ISLAND.

"Oh, many are the beauteous isles,
Unknown to human eye,
That, sleeping 'mid the ocean smiles,
In happy silence lie!
The ship may pass them in the night,
Nor sailors know what a lovely sight,
Is resting on the main."

The Isle of Palms.

"Do not tell me so! I cannot send my children from me; they are the only links between me and the past, and the only ties that bind me to the future. Care and skill"—but here Mr. Selwyn's voice became inaudible Dr. Irvine, the physician to whom he was speaking, gave him no answer, but put back a large curtain that interrupted the view of the lawn, which stretched away from the colonnade that extended round the house. The sun was scarcely risen, and the fresh air of the morning stirred the bright branches of the many blooming and odoriferious shrubs around; the grass glistening with dew, gigantic flowers bright with the sunshine on their rich hues, and all open as if rejoicing in the morning, many coloured birds flit-

ting among the leaves—all these made a scene which might have gladdened the heart of the mourner, and raised to their highest pitch the buoyant spirits of youth; and yet, in the midst of the lawn, beneath a young banana tree, were two children, evidently quite unexhilarated by the freshness of the air or the cheerfulness of the morning. The one was a boy of about nine years of age. He was seated on a bough of the tree which had been trained artificially along the ground. He had been reading, but the book lay on the grass, for his arm supported the head of a little creature about three years old who was leaning against him, half in affection, half for support. There was something very striking, and yet sad, in the appearance of these children, they were singularly handsome and singularly alike: but the cheek might have been marble, it was so utterly devoid of colour, and the faint crimson of the lip was parched and feverish, and the pale face was more striking from the profusion of thick black hair and the large dark and melancholy looking eyes. The boy seemed naturally grave and quiet: but the fairy figure and dimpled mouth of the little girl were at variance with her present listless attitude. "I see it—I see," said Mr. Selwyn, "they are pining away for a healthier air. In two years I can retire to England: but now, amid the many difficulties that surround us, I cannot in honour resign my situation."

"But," returned Dr. Irvine, "you have friends in England: and they are still too young to need that

watchful guidance which will be so important in a few years. I dare not deceive you: Marion will not live over another rainy season: Francis you might venture to retain with you."

"I will not part them; I cannot bear that absence should weaken their now perfect affection: besides (and do not think this weak partiality,) I shall be happier for knowing that Francis is with his sister. In care and thoughtfulness he is far beyond his years, and till I myself can reach England, they shall not be parted."

Dr. Irvine hesitated for a moment: he had only performed one half of his painful task. Mr. Selwyn stood watching from the window the pallid countenance of his little girl, when his friendly adviser broke the silence by saying, "Poor Marion herself is my best argument: but let me impress upon you the necessity of prompt measures, though by your side, from this moment, you are really parted from them: Captain Cameron sails next week. Can your children be in better hands?

"Next week!" exclaimed Mr. Selwyn, in a broken voice.

Dr. Irvine shook hands with him in silence, and left him for the present.

To all parents such a parting would have been a trial; but to Mr. Selwyn it came with more than usual bitterness. Immersed in business, whose fatigue unfitted him for the exertion of society, shy, and reserved in habits, to him his own family was every

thing. His young wife had died a week after Marion's birth, and he had attached himself entirely to his children. He saw in them the relics of the dearest love on earth, and felt that he had to be both father and mother. It was impossible not to be proud of the fine mind and generous temper of Francis; and it was equally impossible not to be enlivened by the gaiety of Marion. But he had for some time remarked that, unless stimulated by his presence to exertion, Francis grew more and more silent, as if talking were a fatigue; his garden was only cultivated at intervals, and his minic frigate remained unfinished. Every day, too, the music of Marion's laugh grew more unfrequent in the house; she loathed her food, and instead of the restless, dancing steps, that seemed never quiet but in sleep, she would creep to the knee of her father, and sit for hours with her languid head resting on his shoulder. Mr. Selwyn had long felt what Dr. Irvine now confirmed, and for him there was but the choice of parting with his children to England, or to the grave. Now, for months and months to come his hearth would be desolate, long solitary evenings, uncheered by the sweet companions now far away, no little hand eagerly put into his for his now solitary walk, and worse than all, strangers would be winning the affections and guiding the youthful hearts hitherto so entirely his own.

Mr. Selwyn had married young and poor, and the early years of his married life had been embittered by struggles which it was his great hope that he

might spare his children. Gradually he had risen to the important situation he now held in Ceylon. Wealth he had accumulated; and, under Providence Francis could never know the same difficulties which had embittered so large a portion of his father's life. But Mr. Selwyn had to learn that there are miseries beyond even those of poverty, and would have gladly given all, beyond a mere competence, of his noble fortune, to have accompanied his children to England.

At length, and yet how soon!—the day came for the sailing of the Warren Hastings. Marion, tired out with fatigue, was asleep, in her cabin with her nurse; but Frank still held his father's hand, who lingered to the last upon deck. But the boat was in waiting, and Dr. Irvine gently but his arm through that of Mr. Selwyn, and drew him away. Once more he clasped his boy in his arms; and Frank turned to his father a pale face, but a tearless eye, and said, in a low, but tolerably steady, voice, "You may trust me, father." The splash of the oars was heard in the water, the boat rowed rapidly away; but the effort the heroic boy had made to subdue his feeling was too much for his enervated frame, and he sank quite insensible on the shoulder of an old sailor who had approached to console him.

The young voyagers had not been a week at sea before its good effects were apparent: both recovered their appetite, and Marion's little feet seemed never weary: long before her brother's shy temper

would permit him to speak, she had made friends with every seaman on board. There are few boys but what are born with a love for a ship and a horse; and, thanks to kindness of the old sailor we have mentioned, Frank was soon initiated into every part of the vessel, and his steps became familiar with the most dangerous parts of the rigging.

But no attraction, whether of amusement, or information, ever diverted his attention from his sister. His eye seemed always upon her; he would give up any employment to attend to her want or wish: he would spend hours amusing her with her box of ivory letters; and not an evening passed but her sweet voice might be heard repeating to her brother her simple prayer and hymn. Already Frank shewed a naturally mechanical genius; but even the carpenter's chest and company never detained him long from Marion, and the great aim of his ingenuity was to construct some slight toy for her. They had now been on board four weeks; and often did Frank wish his father could have seen the light step and bright eyes of the once pale and listless Marion. One evening Frank came up from the cabin, where he had been soothing his sister, who was somewhat restless with the oppressive heat to sleep; and took his usual post beside the old sailor, who, from the first, had made him an especial favourite. Nothing could be clearer than the atmosphere, and the sea was almost as bright and motionless as the sky. Not a single object broke the mighty stillness; no fish were visible

in the clear waters, no birds in the clear air; not another bark shared the ocean with their solitary ship. No wind was striving, the sails hung loose and motionless, and the red flag drooped heavily from the mast. The sailors shared in the general tranquillity, and sat or stood round in silent groups; the oppression of the air seemed also on their spirits. The old seaman, to whom Frank had drawn, was leaning over the side of the vessel, gazing so intently on the distance that his young companion's approach was at first unobserved; when, suddenly turning round, he said. "We shall have rough weather soon, Master Francis." The boy looked on the shining elements around, as much as to ask where was the slightest sign of storm? When the sailor, answering to his gaze, pointed out a small white cloud, or rather speck, which looked as if scarcely freighted with an April shower.

Francis turned pale, for he thought of his young and helpless sister. "Why, you wouldn't be only a fair-weather sailor, would you?" and, turning round the old man began one of those tales of tempest met and baffled by naval skill and courage, which so delighted his youthful auditor. Nearly an hour elapsed, when the narator was called away to his duty in another part of the ship.

The small white cloud had now spread like a white and gigantic veil over half the sky, and an unequal and capricious wind was awakening the sails from their repose; and by the time the dinner hour

came, little order could be preserved among the plates and dishes, which were soon scattered by a sudden squall.

Francis had been accustomed to employ the afternoon in teaching Marion her alphabet, and to spell various small words; but to-day their studies were interrupted—neither could keep their footing a single moment and, by the captain's directions, Marion was fastened in her cot, with a stout silk handkerchief round her waist, and the cot itself strongly lashed to the sides. It was a dismal time, for the waves now ran so high that the port holes were ordered to be closed. Suddenly a deep and hollow sound rolled over the ship, and a faint flash gilmmered through the darkness. That first peal of thunder was like a summons; the wind rose up at once with frantic violence; peal followed peal, and flash followed flash; and the trampling of the hurried steps overhead told of the anxiety and exertion going on above. Frank never for a moment left his sister, who, though too young for fear at their actual danger, was terrified at the unusual darkness and noise. A number of the men now came below; a sound of loosened chains was heard, and plunge after plunge into the waters. They had been forced to throw the guns over-board. Immediately came a tremulous crash, as of the falling of some heavy mass; the mast had been cut away. Frank now fancied that the vessel seemed to reel less, but appeared to be dashing on with frightful velocity. The trampling over head, too, abated, and the thun-

der ceased: it only made the fierce and howling sound of the wind more terrible. At this moment came the gleam of a dark lantern into their cabin; it was the old seaman; but his face was ghastly pale, and his features looked rigid, as if he had suffered from long illness. Francis saw no hope in his countenance, and he asked no questions.

"You have had no food for some hours: I have brought to you, poor things, some biscuit and a slice of ham."

Marion laughed with delight at the sight of the biscuit, for she was very hungry. Poor Frank put away the offered food; his heart was too full to eat, but he clasped the hand of the kind old man, who now turned to go away; but Marion cried to go with him.

"It does not matter," he muttered; "as well above as here."

He then took the child in his arms, and, Frank following with the lantern, they groped their way to the deck. They had not been there five minutes before an awful shock told their worst had come to pass—they had struck upon a rock. A cry of "boats! boats!" now arose; and the lanterns shewed hurrying, and yet despairing, groups thronging to the side.

"Come, Michael!" said two sailors, rushing past. The old man made no reply, but seated himself on a broken fragment of wood, and placed Marion on his knee. Frank immediately took his sister's hand, and drew her towards himself. "Michael, you must not stay with us. God bless you; but go."

"Go! Master Frank," said the sailor, "I have a boy your age at home, and for his sake, I will stay with you. God would desert him in his need, if I deserted you." The glimmer of a lantern amid the thick darkness shewed that the last boat had pushed off. "And you have stayed here to perish!" And, for the first time, Frank gave way to a bitter flood of tears. Michael put his arm kindly around him, and said, "Do you remember the holy words you were teaching your little sister the other morning? 'Do unto others as you would they should do unto you?'"

"Yes," interrupted Marion, "he taught me, too, a new hymn yesterday; I will say it to you;" and she began to repeat one of Watt's beautiful Hymns for Children. She did not quite know it through; but the last two verses were singularly apposite to their situation:

"There's not a plant or flower below,
But makes thy glories known;
And clouds arise, and tempests blow,
By order from thy throne.

Creatures (as numerous as they be)
Are subject to thy care;
There's not a place where we can flee,
But God is present there.

"Our lives are in His hand, and it may be His will even now to save us: somehow, the words of this innocent creature have put hope into my heart:" and the old sailor turned his head to the east, where a dim streak told of the coming day. All know how

rapidly the light of morning floods an eastern heaven; wave upon wave of fire kindled the ship, when Frank, who was looking in an opposite direction to his companion, clapped his hands, and, exclaimed joyfully, "Land! Land!" About a quarter of a mile from the wreck extended a line of coast, whose waving palms might be distinctly seen. Michael gave one look, and sank on his knees to return thanks to Almighty God for their wonderful preservation. They could now see all the bearings of their situation: their ship was jammed in between two rocks, both now visible; the one was higher than the other, and to its raising the head of the vessel whereon they stood might be attributed their safety.

"And the boats!" exclaimed Frank.

"Perished! No boat could have lived through the sea of last night," replied his companion; and both remained for a few minutes gazing on the vast expanse of air and water, which still bore traces of their late convulsion. The sea heaved with a tremulous and unquiet motion, and the sky was covered with broken clouds. But there was no time for melancholy meditation; the wind, which had been gradually veering round, was now blowing full to land, and they were obviously under the necessity of taking advantage of its direction to reach the island with all possible speed. One rough gale would drive to fragments the frail wreck, which yet, had they but kept by it, would have saved the lives of so many. A chest, with carpenters' tools had been lashed upon

deck, and, of the planks and spars scattered round, they soon formed a slight raft. Great part of the ship was under water; but in the captain's cabin they found an ample supply of present necessaries. Wrapping Marion in a boat cloak, they fastened her to a large chest in the midle of the raft. The wind was in their favour, steady and gentle and setting in directly to the shore. Their frail launch went steadily through the water, the low sandy beach was easily gained; and, by ten o'clock, they had kindled a small fire, boiled some cocoa for breakfast, and Marion was asleep beneath the shadow of the knot of palm-trees which had first caught their attention, and under which it was their earliest task to raise a tent sufficient to shelter them from the night dews.

They soon discovered that their place of refuge was a small island, apparently quite uninhabited, and with no sign of any species of animal; but a complete aviary of the most brilliant-coloured birds. With the exception of the little knot of palm-trees where their tent was, that side of the island was a low sandy beach, which, indeed, ran around it like a belt; but the interior was a fertile and beautiful valley; and Frank saw with delight tamarinds growing in great profusion—a species of the bread fruit-tree, the cocoa-nut, and some wild nutmegs; these last, however, imperfect for want of cultivation. The ground, and all the lower branches of the trees, were covered with the most luxuriant creeping plants, whose profusion of flowers Marion was never weary of

gathering; and often, after having piled them up in heaps, she would be found asleep half hidden amid their bright and odoriferous blossoms. The first week passed in continual voyagings backwards and forwards to the ship, when, as Michael had foreseen, a rough gale blew one night, and in the morning there was not a trace of the wreck, That very day, walking along the coast, Frank's eye was caught by a dark mass entangled in the sea-weed: he drew it up by means of a hook. It was the gallant flag, that had once

"Braved the battle and the breeze,"

of the now perished Indiaman. He laid it carefully out on the sands to dry, and went to impart his plan to Michael. The knot of palm-trees was on the only part of the island whose height commanded a view of the sea; yet there it was impossible for them to fix their residence—fresh water, fruits, and shelter, belonging to the other part of the island—and yet, from not being on the spot, a vessel might pass and repass unobserved; thus risking their little chance of escape.

Now it happened that the most conspicuous of the palms was a young and slender tree: this Frank proposed to climb, and affix to its height the flag, which would be as striking a signal as any they could raise. Even Michael shut his eyes, as the daring boy ascended, with the aid of a sharp hook and a knife, with which he cut notches, on which he rested first a hand, and then a foot, till at length he was safely

lodged amid the spreading branches at the top. He then let down a rope, with a pebble at the end, which had been put round his middle; the flag was drawn up, and nailed to the summit in the most conspicuous manner; and then, fastening the rope firmly, he descended to the ground in perfect safety, and, we may add satisfaction.

The next day was the Sabbath, and was passed in rest and thanksgiving. When the heat of the day was over, they walked towards the interior of the island, and almost in the very centre found an immense banana-tree, with at least fifty green and slender pillars forming as it were a natural temple. The whole party knelt; and, at her brother's bidding, Marion's innocent lips were the first to teach that solitude the words of prayer and praise. While they rested, Francis read a chapter from the Bible, which was his father's parting gift; and he can scarcely be blamed if his tears fell fast and heavy on the page. "My child," said the old sailor, "the God who has preserved you so wondrously for your parent, will restore you to him." Frank looked up in hope and graditude, and to gather some tamarinds for Marion; and, by repeating yesterday's task of climbing a cocoa-nut near, made a valuable addition to their store.*

* The cocoa-nut shoot up to the height of seventy, and sometimes eighty feet: we were told that a hundred feet is not uncommon, but I think we saw none so high. The fruit grows in immense clusters at the top of the stem, close

Close beside, like a vein of silver, they found a pure, though small, fountain; they steeped some of

up to the branches. The tree from top to bottom is surrounded by a series of rings, doubtless the traces of former circles of branches which have successively flourished decayed, and fallen off. These rings are very distinct near the top; but lower down the trunk becomes so smooth that the natives are obliged to cut notches to assist them in getting up, either to pull the fruit, or to tap the tree of its juice which is called toddy by the English. "The method used by the natives of the east in performing this feat of climbing—In the first place, they unite their feet, either at the great toes or ankles, by a thong or strap about ten or twelve inches in length. This lies across the steps or notches cut in the tree, and is strong enough to support the whole weight of the body. A flat board belt is then made to pass round the tree, and also round the man's middle, enclosing both in one ring, as it were, the body being at the distance of a foot or so from the tree. The climber commences by placing the strap which ties his feet together across the first or lowest step, while he adjusts the belt, embracing him and the tree so as to be horizontal, he then plants his hands firmly against the stem, and a foot, or a foot and a half, below the belt. By now leaning back and tightening the body-belt, he divides his weight between it and his arms, so as entirely to relieve the foot-strap of all strains. The legs are next drawn up quietly, till the foot-strap lies across the second notch. The climber now removes his hands from the tree, and grasps the body-belt, which becomes quite slack on his throwing his body forward till it almost touches the stem—his whole weight meanwhile resting on the foot-strap. By a sudden movement he then jerks the slakened belt about a foot and a half further up the

the fruit in the water, and, with one of the cocoa nuts, they made a most delicious meal. The moon was shining over the dim and purple sea before they re-gained their tent.

For some days following, their labour was incessant—the banama tree seemed to be made too obviously for their home to be neglected; they cut away some of the boughs, and, stripping off some of the leaves, formed a kind of wall of branches and reeds, of which a large species grew near, and in great quantities. The spring they had found oozed away to a considerable distance, and at last was quite lost in a bed of greyish clay. Frank had often seen the natives of the villages, whither he had sometimes gone, fashioning clay into any form by the action of fire, and an idea struck him that they might harden square

tree. After this he once more rests his hand on the stem, relieves his feet of the weight, and draws them up, as before, till the next notch receives the foot-strap, and so on till he reaches the top. He carries along with him an earthen pot slung round his neck, and a huge knife at his girdle. With this he cuts away the young sprouts, and draws off the toddy, which appears to be the sap intended by nature to form the fruit. When freshly taken from the tree, in the cool of the morning, it forms a delicious drink, not unlike whey in appearance, with a slightly acid, taste, and a pleasant sweetness, as well as sharpness or briskness not very dissimilar to that of ginger-beer, only more racy and peculiar in its flavour."—Captain Hall's *Fragments of Voyages and Travels*, Second series, vol 2., pp. 217—219.

pieces of this clay, so as to form a floor for their dwelling, the soft damp earth beneath the banana being both comfortless and unhealthy. His plan was adopted, and they had soon a hard, dry, and firm floor.

There being certainly no risk of robbers, they left most of the things brought from the wreck, on the palm-tree knoll, having run up a slight partition of boards for their protection, only taking to the banama what was absolutely necessary. Francis, too, was the archer of the party; he had been accustomed to the use of a bow and arrow from his infancy, and a little practice made him so expert a shot that they were seldom without a bird for dinner; indeed, the island swarmed with them; and then they were roasted gypsy fashion—a fire was kindled on the ground, and the bird hung between two sticks to roast.

No time was ever lost, and nobody was ever idle even Marion's services were called in requisition; and she soon became very industrious in collecting all the light and dried sticks to be used for fuel. One of their first tasks had been to plant some yams and peas in an open space, and their labour was rewarded, for they throve amazingly. Whether it was the change, the spare diet, the exercise, and being constantly out in the open air, but the children became quite robust in health; and Marion began to acquire a tint of crimson, quite English, on her cheek. Her childish age made her the happy one of the party; for Frank, even when most exhilarated by the success of any plan, was ever haunted by the thought of his

father's despair when he should learn that the Warren Hastings had never arrived in port. Could he but have had his father with him, he thought life would have been perfectly happy, passed in their little island —if he could but let him know their escape. At length an idea, almost an inspiration, came across his mind: he had heard of papers being sealed up in bottles, trusted to the mercy of the waves, and yet wonderfully coming to human knowledge at last Accordingly, he wrote three distinct accounts of the shipwreck: described, which Michael's knowledge enabled him to do, the latitude of the island; gave his father's address, and also that of his London correspondent; finally, he took three bottles, placed in them the precious papers, and committed them to the sea. He was the more encouraged to this by Michael's observation, that a strong current run southward on the left side of the island.

There had now elasped three months since their shipwreck, and the rainy season had set in. For this, however, they were well prepared. The banana tree stood on an emience, and two drains, that they had cut, carried away all moisture. The roof was quite impervious to rain; and they had an ample stock of dried tamarinds, cocoa-nuts, heaps of the bread-fruit, kept in the sand like apples, their pease, almost all of which they had dried, biscuits, preserves, and salted provisions which yet remained of the ship's store. They had formed three rooms, and the rest of the banana tree, or rather grove, was like a

covered garden, where Marion could run about in safety. But it soon became too evident that Michael's health was failing; he complained of dull weary pains at night: he loathed his food, and could with difficulty be prevailed on to take a little tea that was kept exclusively for him. Some arrow-root, which was found in a jar, now became invaluable; and, once or twice, Frank had the good luck to kill a bird, though the violence of the weather drove them mostly to shelter; and then, after a failure or so, he became quite skilful in broth-making. But Michael grew, daily, weaker and weaker—he could just creep from and to his bed, but that was all. Every thing now devolved on Francis; but Marion, who was a little, quiet, affectionate thing, would sit for hours by the old man's hammock, reach him refreshments, call her brother if he was wanted, and beguiled many a weary hour with her stock of hymns and scripture history.

Fine weather came at last, but it brought no strength to Michael. One day, with Frank's assistance, he wandered out a brief distance in the fresh morning air; with difficulty he returned to his hammock, and thence he never rose—he died that very afternoon. About an hour before he breathed his last, he called Frank to his side, gave him directions how to bury him, told him that it was his last belief that God in his mercy would restore Francis and his sister to their father, and commended to their future aid the faithless orphan Philip Michael, whom he had

himself left at Southampton. Francis wept his promise. The old man then blessed them both, and said he was weary, and would fain sleep. They knew not when his spirit departed, for he died without a struggle.

One of the singularly brilliant butterflies, with which the island abounded, had for some time been skimming about on its white and azure wings; at last it settled on the sick man's face; Frank rose to drive the insect away, and saw with terror the change of countenance which had taken place; his exclamation brought Marion from the adjoining room, whither she had been sent, lest her movements might disturb Michael's sleep. "He is dead, Marion!—dead! He will never look at or speak to us again! We have lost our only friend!" The poor boy sat down on the wooden stool and sobbed; Marion began to cry too; and the evening closed upon their lamentations. The little girl was too young for sorrow and sleep not to be near comrades; her brother saw her weariness, gave her the usual supper of a piece of biscuit, and another of cocoa nut, and watched by her till she was fast asleep. He then returned to the room where Micael lay, and remembered his last injunctions, and prepared to obey them.

A wick, floating in a goblet of oil, gave a dim and wavering light, scarcely sufficient for Francis to perform his sorrowful business. Michael had died with almost the very words on his lips urging the necessity of immediate burial; and this the boy was preparing to effect—for the life had now been departed twelve

hours—and he himself wished to avoid leaving any gloomy impressions on the mind of such an infant as Marion: for himself he had no fear; he knew God was as much present with the dead as with the living.

It was almost beyond his strength; but by lowering the hammock, as Michael had directed, on a frame which was below, and which, running on four rudely constructed wheels, had been used to drag whatever they had wanted from the store at the palm-knoll, he contrived to convey the body from the dwelling. He took the way he had been told; and the burden was easily drawn, for it was on a descending slope the whole way.

He soon reached the palm the old sailor had indicated, and there saw what had been the last employment of his more than kind protector—the grave was ready dug. Frank sat down by its side; and sobbed as if his heart were breaking; at length he tighened the ropes of the hammock till it closed, like a shroud round the body: he turned over the frame, and it fell with a heavy sound into the deep grave. Frank paused for a moment, and then proceeded to throw in the mould heaped on either side. The pit was at last full; but he could not bear to trample it down. He then knelt, and by the light of the clear full moon, now shining in the glory of a tropical night, read aloud the burial service of the dead. The solemn and consoling words had their due effect. With a tranquilised spirit he returned home. His sister had never before been left for one quarter of an hour by

herself; yet he had felt no anxiety, Providence was watching over her, and there he found her; her little arm under her head, almost hidden by the black curls, the sweet breath coming regularly from her parted lips, one cheek flushed into the brightest rose and seeming as if she had never stirred since he had parted from her. Francis did not himself attempt to go to bed. At length fatigue overpowered him, and he slept long and sweetly. On his awakening he found Marion seated at his feet watching, but without an effort to disturb him, though it was long past noon. Mournfully, indeed, did the first week pass away without Michael; incessant were Marion's enquiries when he would return: it is so difficult to give a child an idea of death. But, as day after day passed by, poor Frank grew more anxious; for now the provisions, saved from the wreck, were almost exhausted. All that were left he put by carefully for the rainy season; he also, unless one now and then, as a rare treat to Marion, saved all the cocoa-nuts; and they lived entirely on what birds he shot, and the tamarinds. Both, however, continued in perfect health; and Marion now began to read prettily. Still, he dreaded the approach of the rainy season; for, with all his exertion, his stock of food ran short, and his crop of pease had failed.

During Michael's lifetime, not a day had passed but he had gone to the sea-shore; now he could only go at intervals, for he had no one to take charge of Marion in his absence, and it was too far for her to

walk, unless they could give nearly the whole day, and, by dining under the palm-trees, allow sufficient time for her to rest. The red flag still floated in the air, and on the trunk of the tree he carved the following inscription—"Francis and Marion Selwyn were saved from the wreck of the Warren Hastings, and are now living on this island. Should any land, they are implored not to leave the shore without first searching the interior." Having thus taken every possible precaution, they rarely left their own hut; and Frank busily employed himself in endeavouring to salt some of the birds he killed, and, by drying them over the smoke of a wood fire, found he succeeded very tolerably.

The rainy season again commenced; and it was with a heavy heart Frank listened to the rushing of the first mighty rains. However, he was too busy for despondency; several chests of clothes had floated on shore, and both were now employed in recruiting their own dilapidated wardrobe. The blue checked shirts were invaluable, for out of these he made Marion's new frocks, which he decorated very gaily with the bright coloured feathers he had collected in great quantities. The sewing certainly was a curiosity; for his only needle was a fine splinter of wood, in which he had burnt an eye: and it may be guessed that he was not very expert in its use. Still, the frock kept her warm, the feathers were quite gay, Marion thought herself an Indian princess at least. Making baskets of the various twigs he had collected was

another source of employment; and teaching Marion filled up the day. But the long dark nights were very tedious; for they had no lights, and no means of making any; and the small portion of oil left after Michael's death was husbanded carefully in case of an emergency. With great joy did both the children watch the abating rains; and the first day they could get as far as the palm-trees was one of absolute festivity.

They had been a year and three months on the island, when, one day, as Francis was climbing a tamarind tree, the branches on which he stood gave way: he was precipitated to the ground, and sprained his ankle. For the first time Frank thought their situation hopeless; their little garden must now remain uncultivated; their fruit ungathered, and unfortunately, the accident had happened at a considerable distance from home.

"Marion, my poor little sister!" exclaimed he, leaning his face on her shoulder, while he felt the large tears of the affectionate child falling on his hand. Both started; for at that moment they most assurdly heard the sound of voices. Frank sprang to his feet but the pain was excruciating, and he sank on the grass. Voices were again heard, when, joining his hands together, so as to convey the sound farther, he gave a loud shout. It was answered; figures appeared among the trees, and in another moment they were in the arms of their father.

The blessing of God had been upon their plan; one

of the bottles had been picked up at sea, and forwarded to Mr. Selwyn, who lost not a moment in hastening to the place indicated. A little assistance allayed the pain of frank's ankle; and a sort of hand-barrow was soon formed. He was seated on it, and carried in triumph by the sailors; for not one but shared in the admiration excited by the resolution and the resources he had displayed. Little Marion in her robe of parti-coloured feathers, and her hat of palm-leaves, was for the next two days her father's guide. It will readily be believed with what interest every spot in the island was visited. At Frank's earnest desire, a large wooden cross was placed over Michael's grave; and there (for a few days' rest and care restored the use of his ankle; and during those few days the ship was taking in fresh water) he and Marion paid their last visit.

The voyage was unmarked by any adventure; and, with no ordinary feelings of thankfulness, Mr. Selwyn found himself once more in his native land, and with his children at his side. It will be readily supposed that the first employment of the Selwyns was to find out Philip Michael. To oblige Francis, they themselves went to Southampton, where they learn that, his uncle being dead, he had been placed, by the parish, in the service of a neighbouring farmer. Thither Mr. Selwyn and his son directed their steps. Philip came into the room—a fine intelligent looking lad, but pale and depressed. Mr. Selwyn asked

Francis what he wished to have done for the lad they were about to take into their own care.

"His father was my father, and shall he not be my brother?"

Mr. Selwyn embraced his child; and from that hour the young Michael was treated as one of their family. He did their gratitude ample credit; and amid all the prosperity which was the lot of their future life, none of them ever forgot their early lessons of exertion, content, and reliance on Providence.

FRANCES BEAUMONT.

FRANCES BEAUMONT.

CHAPTER I.

November's night is dark and drear,
The dullest month of all the year.

And yet the November evening now closing in round Mrs. Cameron's house was of a very cheerful nature. The sea breeze, for the house was at Brighton. howled over the roof, but only made the fire burn the brighter. A large and old fashioned mantel-shelf, divers ornaments a little the worse for the wear, but still in tolerable preservation; and the well filled grate below flung forward the huge shadow of the high fender that surrounded it. The school-room, for such was the apartment of which we speak, was a spacious apartment, the walls were hung round with maps, and deal tables and benches, and small upright chairs were its principal furniture. To be sure there was Mrs. Cameron's small mahogany table and her arm chair, and these were a variety from the plain boards. But it was human life to which the room owed its cheerfulness—groups of young and happy faces were scattered around, the sound of childish voices rose plea-

santly to the roof, and the echo of their laughter echoed gaily from the old walls. Mrs. Cameron's was a very select establishment, her systems were always of the newest and most approved order; it was a common remark that no one could mistake the dancing of one of her pupils, and their performance on the harp was equally celebrated. The following one was the most important of the year. The prizes were distributed, drawings were exhibited, songs and sonatas were applauded, and the evening concluded with a ball. The various groups were all busy in some preparation for the morrow. Here sandals were being sown on white satin shoes, there the bows were being fastened on a white satin sash, and one of the teachers had already begun curling the hair of some of the younger children. Near her were three of the elder girls, happily employed in doing nothing;—talking over the events that were to happen on the morrow was very sufficient employment.

"I wish Fanny Beaumont were here, I want to ask her advice whether I shall tack on my blue or white trimmings."

"She is still with the signor," said the second, "her singing is to be something wonderful to-morrow."

"And I want to see her dress," exclaimed a third.

"Talking of dress," interrupted the teacher, "I wish one of you would put a string in little Isabel's frock. I have my hands full, and shall never get done. By the bye, that tiresome child has not yet said her

French lesson. Miss Elphinstone, bring your book hither. At these dreadful words, a little girl came from one of the farthest corners, she was very dark, thin and pale, her face swelled with crying, and the red circle round her eyes quite destroyed any beauty they might from their size or expression have possessed. She gave the volume with a trembling hand—and began to repeat the intricate French verb. She was too anxious and too timid to say it, even if she knew it, and the grammar was returned with the encouraging exclamation of "You grow stupider every day, and while you are poking over that old verb, who is to mend your frock, I should like to know—" The child did not attempt an answer, but returned to her corner and there indulged, if indulgence it could be called, in a fresh burst of sobs. At this moment a voice was heard in the passage running over the notes of a popular Italian song—the door opened, and in bounded, but with a vivacity full of grace, a tall handsome girl, with a profusion of bright hair falling in the softest ringlets, whom twenty different tones greeted with the same ejaculation."

"Fanny Beaumont, do come here."

No patriot fresh from an harrangue to the people, no General in the first flush of victory, and its consequences, illuminations and public dinners; not even these have a popularity that comes more immediate and home to them than a popular school girl. Her circle is small, but its triumph is complete.

Fanny Beaumont was courted and flattered by eve-

ry member of the little society of which she was the star. Her mistress was proud of the elegant and accomplished pupil who did her establishment such credit, nor was she insensible to the large bills duly paid, nor to the handsome presents which wound up every year in the most agreeable manner. With the teachers she was an equal favourite, her liberality was unbounded, and her purse always well filled, but that was little compared with the kindly manner in which she conferred a favor: a lively temper, a constant readiness to afford assistance, made her equally beloved by her companions, and in Fanny Beaumont's case the old proverb had no truth, that a favorite has no friends. In her case every possible advantage seemed realized. The darling of wealthy parents, neither pains nor cost were spared on her education, and she had those natural talents which reward cultivation, while she had what was even more than talent, that kindness of heart, and that sweet and affectionate disposition, which even prosperity cannot spoil. As she past up the room, her step buoyant, and her beautiful face beaming with gaiety and health—she seemed like the very extreme contrast to the pale and sickly child who sat weeping in the corner, the only one who did not call her. But the poor little West Indian was not over-looked—Frances' quick eye soon observed her trouble, and turning to her side, she said in a low and consoling whisper, "The signor kept me longer than I expected, but I have not forgotten my promise to help you with the French lesson—What, crying, my poor

Emeline, fie, fie, dry up your tears, while I am speaking to Miss Aiken, and I shall be back in a moment. You know how well we always get on together."

The child gave one deep sob, but it was the last, and Fanny went to the fire-place to settle the important question of blue or white trimming. "White, by all means, and when the children are gone, I will tack it on for you."

"Oh, Miss Beaumont," exclaimed the teacher, "she has nothing to do, and I was going to ask you to help me with Miss Elphinstone's frock I am sure it is a shame to ask you to touch such an old thing."

"Never mind, I will come and make myself generally useful in five minutes."

"I must say," remarked the teacher, as she left the fire-place, "Miss Beaumont is an example to you all, she never minds her own trouble, and does remember that of other people."

The object of her eulogium in the mean time had sought out the poor little learner in the dark corner, who awaited her with tears already dried, and eyes beginning to brighten. Infinite were the pains she bestowed on a pupil who was rather timid than stupid, and whose success at last rewarded her exertions. "You can say it now. Take up your book, and if you repeat it well, I will ask leave to curl your hair myself." The child took up her lesson, fortified by the consciousness of knowing it properly. While she was saying it, a summons came for Miss Beaumont to the parlor, a box had arrived for her from London.

"Be sure you bring your dress in here to shew us," was the universal exclamation. Fanny promised, and tripped lightly away. Her absence was however longer than they expected; at last she returned bringing with her a very elegant looking dress, which she good naturedly held on high, for general inspection. One little step this time ventured to meet her, and a little face bright with smiles, looked up as Emeline Elphinstone whispered "I have said my lesson."

"It is very beautiful," exclaimed Miss Aiken, "but it is white muslin; I thought that you said you would have white crape, this half."

"I could not afford it," replied Fanny; "and white muslin is just as pretty. But look at the white ribbon trimming. I am sure I can put on yours just the same."

"And Miss Aiken perhaps will do Miss Elphinstone's frock." "Leave that to me," exclaimed Fanny, "you know she is my child, and as she has said her lesson, will you let me curl her hair?"

"Yes, and thank you into the bargain," replied the teacher, glad to get rid of the job.

The little West Indian's lot was very different from that of her protector. She came to school straight from her native island, ignorant, spoilt, and with even more than a usual share of indolence belonging to a warmer climate. She had however more indulgences than the other children, her father seemed desirous of making up to her for the necessity of sending her from home. The allowance made on her account

was more than liberal, it was extravagant; her pocket-money was quite unfit for a child of her age, so was her dress, and for the first year of her residence in England, she labored under all the disadvantages of undue preference, and improper indulgence. Fortune however had a severe lesson in store. She had not been above some fifteen months at Mrs. Cameron's before the usual remittances failed.

It was war-time, and one vessel after another was intercepted: a year had elapsed, and Mrs. Cameron's "little account" as she always called it, was still unsettled. She was too humane a woman to make any alteration in the treatment of her pupil; moreover she did not dislike talking about "the interest she took in the unfortunate child, whose destitute situation was such an appeal to her feelings." But in the school, Miss Elphinstone's position was wholly changed, she had no longer any pocket money, and, with that, disappeared all the considerations and indulgences it had procured. Obliged to go wearing her dresses, which she was daily outgrowing, their alteration and repairs were a perpetual source of discontent to the teachers, and of this discontent Emeline soon felt the effects. Her slow progress in her studies became matter of constant complaint, and even Mrs. Cameron became more severe, for she felt she could not justify to herself any neglect of an education that might hereafter be its possessor's sole resource. A miserable child was Emeline Elphinstone. She missed the petting, the niceties, and the excuses to which she had been

hitherto accustomed. Too much was expected from her at first, she grew discouraged, and persuaded of her own inability, soon obtained the character of equal sullenness and stupidity. She was so often in disgrace that she lost all hope of avoiding it.

Children are too often unkind to one another, and deny the allowance they so much need in their own case. Emeline Elphinstone was not a pretty child, she was little for her age, thin and awkward, her dark complexion, unrelieved by any shade of colour, gave a heaviness to her countenance, which was not improved by a profusion of black hair never in very good order. Fanny Beaumont had been absent from school for half a year, and on her return, her quick and kind feelings were at once enlisted on the behalf of the poor pale little thing whom she saw constantly moping about, or crying in some corner or other. In spite of all that was said of her dulness and her obstinacy, she took her under her especial charge, and was more than repaid by the affection of the grateful child.

Her task was not an easy one. Timid and hopeless—she had some difficulty in persuading Emeline that it was possible to learn at all. Her native indolence too was a great obstacle—but the most unwearying patience was gradually successful, and it was allowed that "Miss Beaumont would make something of that stupid child at last."

Miss Beaumont was quite convinced of this herself. In one branch, she made great progress; one too

which had as yet been unattempted, but Fanny, who observed her ear for music, resolved on beginning to teach her. The child made great progress, and it was useful in two ways. First, it shewed Emeline that there was something she could learn, and learn well; and secondly, that very learning became the reward of her other exertions.

A bright sunny morning was the next day, only less cheerful than the eyes which it awakened: at an early hour the school room was all gaiety and bustle. There were garlands to be suspended, green boughs to be placed, and flowers to be arranged—in all this Fanny's taste was as conspicuous as her activity. The garlands were mostly of her making, the flowers most of her nursing, and all allowed that none could dispose them with half the effect that she could. The task was at length completed, the school rooms had truly put on their holiday look, and Mrs. Cameron was called in to approve and to admire. She was a lady-like person, a little stately, but that suited well with the authority of her station. She came in, and looked round, "I must say, young ladies, this is prettier than ever, your exertions leave me nothing to desire—but you must not over tire yourselves. I want to have you all looking as well as possible."

She then walked through the rooms, admired them in detail, and said something pleasant to almost every one. "I believe now I have nothing more to say, you have all my directions. Ah, yes, one thing I had forgotten.—Miss Marshal, and Miss Elphinstone,

come here. Why, my loves, you have at least fifty curl-papers in—but I suppose to-day the ringlets are to be in extra order—Yes, it is just as I thought, they are exactly of a height—They shall walk together in the march."

"I beg your pardon, Madam," said one of the teachers following her to the door, "but you said yesterday—Miss Marshal was to lead the march by herself. It is a very conspicuous place, and really Miss Elphinstone's dress is a disgrace."

"Never mind," replied Mrs. Cameron, "Miss Beaumont has undertaken her toilette, and I have great confidence in Fanny's taste. By the way, Fanny, I want to consult you about the flowers on the table in the saloon."

"Well, if that is not too bad," exclaimed Miss Marshal—a little fair-haired blue-eyed girl, who was the school pet and beauty. "And so, with my new dress, I am to walk with that shabby thing." No one else expressed this sentiment so loudly—but many felt it, and it produced a general feeling of ill will to the unlucky Emeline, to whom it soon showed itself in the shape of taunts and sneers. Pride checked the poor child's tears, but she retreated to a corner, where her utmost efforts could not prevent the long eye-lashes from glittering. With a down-cast head she heard the various groups disperse and go up stairs to the agreeable duties of dressing. Suddenly she heard a light and well-known step—and a glad sweet voice ex-

claimed "Why is my little Emeline seated all alone, what is she thinking about?"

"I was thinking," said the child earnestly, for she was scarcely yet aroused from the train of thoughts in which she was engrossed, "how pleasant it was for Cinderella to have a godmother who was a fairy."

"And also thinking, I guess, that you would like such a godmother too."

"Ah, I wish that I had one, indeed."

"And what would be your first wish?"

"A new frock—for Miss Marshal says mine is so shabby she will be ashamed to walk with me."

"It is very wrong of Miss Marshal to say any such thing, but come up stairs with me, and we will see whether we shall not do very well without fairy or god mother."

Fanny ran rapidly towards her own room, followed by her little companion. "Look there," exclaimed she. Emeline looked in the direction to which she pointed; and, laid out on the bed, was a little white muslin frock, trimmed with white satin ribbon. "Who do you think that is for?"

Emeline looked first at the frock, it was just the length of her own: then in the smiling face of her youthful freind—she could not speak, a hope too delightful for expression had lighted up her large dark eyes.

"Yes, it is for you, my little Emeline must wear it for my sake." Emeline threw her arms round her neck, but it was some moments before she could

speak her thanks. Her little eyes were full of tears and gratitude for a while over-powered even pleasure.

Fanny kissed her, and then said "We are late, and must, make so much haste; besides I long to know if it will fit you."

She began to unfasten the numerous curl-papers which had cost her so much labour the night before. The hair was in first rate curl, and by the time some half dozen ringlets were combed out, Emeline found voice to say, "I can never thank you enough my dearest, kindest Miss Beaumont, but I am so happy.

Indeed her happiness was too great to allow of her standing still, only Fanny at last very judiciously turned her face towards the new dress, and the hair was soon finished. The frock fitted to perfection, and, again thanking and kissing its kind donor, Emeline hurried to the school-room where she was greeted with a universal exclamation of surprise. "It is Miss Beaumont's present," exclaimed the child, eager to proclaim the name of her benefactor.

"I now understand why Miss Beaumont could not afford white crape," remarked Miss Aiken.

"It is just like her," replied the teacher. Fanny's own toilette was hurried, all important as was the day, by the information that her causin Mr. Beaumont was waiting to see her in the parlour. Fanny hastily smoothed back her beautiful ringlets, and, without even a last look at the glass to judge of the general effect, hurried down stairs. Mr. Beaumont was a lad

of about nineteen, but his sailor's dress made him look still younger.

"How glad I am to see you," exclaimed she on entering the room, "you are come just in time to dance with me to-night. I shall see how well you remember my lessons."

"Nay," replied her cousin, "I should be very sorry to bring you to shame with my akwardness, though I remember one part of your lessons very well, namely your patience; but I am only come to bid you good bye."

"Good bye? where are you going?"

"I am going to Portsmouth, and this is a sort of a way to it. My ship is under sailing orders, but I could not leave England without a last look at my pretty cousin."

"I am so sorry," said Fanny in a melancholy tone, "I shall miss you so in the holidays."

"And I am sure I shall miss you, but I am glad to go to sea again; I hate staying at home doing nothing. Perhaps a day may come when I shall show my uncle and all of you that I do not forget your kindness."

"But are you really obliged to go to-day? Could you not stay just this one evening?"

"Quite impossible: but I see that I am come just in time, for, Fanny, you are as gay as a queen. So saying he turned her round to admire her dress, and, taking a little parcel from his pocket, undid several folds of paper, and finally produced a small gold chain

and a cornelian heart. "I have brought you a keepsake, and you must wear it to-day."

"How very pretty," exclaimed she, "how kind you are to think of me. I shall take such care of it for your sake."

"I will bring you a chain from Trinchinopoly when I come back, but you will have a long time to wait for it."

Fanny eyes filled with tears, and George felt inclined to follow her example, but this the dignity of his uniform forbade, and bidding "God bless you, dearest Fanny," in a broken voice, he hurried to the door and was gone while she was yet standing in the middle of the room, with the chain in her hand; a step in the passage aroused her, and she ran into her own apartment, where she first cried her eyes red, and then exhausted her stock of rosewater in effacing the traces of tears. Time past on, and she heard her name called more than once before she obeyed the summons. Never had she felt so little inclined for exertion. Still, when she entered the room, it was not in the nature of a girl of sixteen to be insensible to the praises bestowed on her appearance. Mrs. Cameron's smile was a great stimulus, she felt that she was bound to do her kind instructress all the credit that could be given by the display of whatever accomplishments she might possess. The sight of Emeline, who turned towards her a face literally "covered all over with smiles," was very cheering. The company began to assemble, and Fanny entered,

like the rest, into the pleasant anxiety and excitement of the hour. Many an admiring eye was cast upon her, and scarcely one there but asked, "who was that very lovely girl?"

We have said before that Mrs. Cameron's manner was a little stately, the consequence perhaps of her tall and erect and figure, but, she united with it a graciousness, and a happiness of phrase, that an ambassadress might have envied. Every prize was given with a few kind and encouraging words that doubled its value; and the parents around were divided between admiration of the good fortune which had blessed them with such children, and of the governess who so well understood how to devolope such excellent dispositions. But every human triumph must have its end, and even this eventful morning drew to a close. The visitors adjourned to the saloon to partake the light refreshment of an elegant looking luncheon, and the children gladly gathered round a table covered with good things of a more substantial order. After dinner was concluded, Mrs. Cameron, whose other visiters were by that time dispersed, came to do the honors of the dessert, which was this day plentifully allotted to the school girls; she helped them herself to wine and fruit, expressing her great satisfaction at the way in which everything had gone off. You must now, all of you, keep very quiet till the evening, that you may be able to enjoy yourselves. Dancing will begin at eight o'clock."

She rose from the table, but when she reached the

door, turned round, and again thanked the young ladies for their exertions, "and it were injustice, Miss Beaumont, to pass you over without saying how much I was gratified by the universal approbation which rewarded your efforts—you even surpassed my expectations." No wonder that Fanny's heart beat, and her cheek glowed with conscious pleasure.

CHAPTER II.

Fanny was seated in the centre of a group who were discussing the events of the morning, and in the gaiety of youthful spirits, extracting mirth out of the merest trifle, when the door of the school room opened suddenly, and "Miss Beaumont, you are wanted," broke up the little circle.

Fanny hurried away, amid the exclamations of the girls, "We hope you will soon be back again."

To her great surprise she met Mrs. Cameron in the passage, who, looking pale and agitated, caught Fanny's hand, and led her into the parlor where the mother's maid was standing, looking even yet more pale. "What is the matter, my father, my mother!" exclaimed Fanny, fearing she knew not what.

"Compose yourself, my dearest girl," said Mrs. Cameron, "your mother has sent for you home, I grieve to say your Father"—— the unfinished sentence died on her lips.

"He is ill, for God's sake, do not let us lose a moment, I shall be ready in an instant." She flew out of the room, and with a trembling hand Mrs. Cameron rang the bell, and desired one of the teachers to go and render Miss Beaumont all possible assistance. Then, pouring out a glass of wine which she made

the servant drink, she gathered from her a more distinct account of the circumstances which led to this sudden summons. Mr. Beaumont was no more. He had been found in his library, before a table covered with papers, among which he had seemed busily engaged. The butler, who went to call him to breakfast, found his master dead. Mrs. Beaumont was in a state of distraction. Her only intelligible words were those which asked for her daughter Fanny, and the woman had of her own accord, or rather after a consultation with her fellow servants, set off to fetch the unfortunate girl. Hastily cautioning her against telling the melancholy intelligence till her young mistress was in the carriage, and there to communicate it as gently as possible, Mrs. Cameron broke off her discourse, for, in less time than had seemed possible, Fanny came down equipped for her journey. A hasty embrace, a few broken words, and a faltering "God bless you, my poor dear child," from her governess, and Fanny found herself driving off with a rapidity that added to the confusion of her ideas.

"Can they not drive faster?" exclaimed she in an agony of fear.

"Lord, Miss, it is of no use now," said the servant. Fanny sprang from her seat, she looked almost doubtfully in the face of her attendant: it confirmed her worst terror, and she sank back insensible. It were needlessly painful to enter into the detail of that miserable journey, but all that Fanny had previously endured seemed as nothing when she drove into the

street where they lived, and saw the house shut up; they stopped, and the door was opened by a stranger, though their own servant stood in the passage.

"How is my mother?" asked she, in a voice scarcely audible. The old man only shook his head, he could not find words to answer. Fanny had hardly power to reach her mother's apartment, she leant for a moment against the wall, before she entered. Bewildered as she was by the shock with which death and sorrow had come upon her, she could not but notice another strange man passing along the passage. The desire of avoiding him gave her courage to enter the room. Dark as it was, she could see her mother laid on the sofa, and her little sister seated on a stool beside. On her entrance, the child looked up with a frightened air, but, instantly recognising her, ran and clasped her round the neck, and Fanny felt her face wet with tears: alas! the poor little creature had no other means of expression, for she was deaf and dumb. Fanny took her up in her arms, and approached the couch on tip-toe, where Mrs. Beaumont was extended in the worn-out sleep of exhaustion.—Knowing her mother's habits, she was surprised to find her without an attendant, but, fearing to disturb her, she sat down quietly, with Edith on her knee, and gave way to a subdued, but agonizing burst of tears. Suddenly the door of the apartment opened, and in rushed the companion of her journey, too agitated to have the least self-control. "Oh, Miss," exclaimed she sobbing hysterically, "this is too dread-

ful, there is an execution in the house." The noise roused Mrs. Beaumont, who started up from her slumber, she looked wildly around, and almost shrieked, "Can I not be quiet one moment?"

"Mother, dearest Mother," whispered Fanny, springing forward, and, in another instant, she was clasped in her Mother's arms, whose violent weeping at last exhausted itself: and she remained, her head resting on her daughter's shoulder, in a state of complete stupefaction. It was night before Fanny could steal away, she could not rest, without having performed the last sôlemn duty—She went to look on her father's beloved face, now pale and set in the cold rigidity of death—She knelt down there quite alone, no one watched beside the deserted coffin, but the lonely and heart-stricken orphan, who passed the night in prayer. The next day brought neither comfort nor hope—her poor little afflicted sister followed her about the darkened house, like her shadow, looking ill and pale, but lacking the power to express her sympathy, or lessen either fear, or sorrow, by the kindly intercourse of words.

Her mother's state was deplorable, she sank beneath the pressure of misfortune, without an effort at self-control, or exertion—to lie on the sofa, and cry herself to sleep was all of which she was as yet capable. She was only roused into something like anger, by her favorite maid leaving her, as she had an offer from a lady who was about to travel, and had always so much admired her style of doing Mrs. Beaumont's hair.

Every order, indeed every thing, devolved upon Fanny, and the difficulties around her might well have appalled one far older, and far wiser, than an inexperienced school girl. Mr. Beaumont's commercial undertakings had been of a wide and speculative order, and their failure had been total. One loss had followed upon another, and the failure of a bank, with which he was connected, was the last and heaviest misfortune of all. The shock had doubtless hastened his death, and it was impossible for any situation to be more utterly destitute than that in which he had left his family. In his prosperity, hard, arrogant and grasping, he had made no friends—and his children were equally without support, assistance, or advice.

Mrs. Beaumont, a vain, pretty, and silly woman, was utterly unable to bear up against the torrent of misfortune which assailed her. To lament, and wonder, was all of which Mrs. Beaumont was capable. Twenty times a day she would say, "But your papa was so rich, he must have left something for us. It is very cruel of those odious creditors:" all sorrow for her husband's memory was swallowed up in reproach. Fanny used every effort to console, and when she could not soothe, at least she listened patiently.

Mrs. Beaumont's jewels were of course taken, but Fanny's manner had so much interested one of the creditors, who had a daughter about her age, that he exerted himself in the cause of the bereaved family.

They were allowed to retain their personal effects—

and these he also aided Fanny to dispose of, for she saw at once their uselessness in what was likely to be their future situation. Her mother would exhaust herself in useless complaints, find fault with every inevitable arrangement, and end by leaving the almost broken-hearted girl to manage as she could. At last, her discontent took the form of an earnest longing to leave London: it was the best possible shape it could have taken, for had the proposal originated in any one but herself, it would have been impossible to obtain her consent. The only servant who remained with them was the housemaid, who was Fanny's chief attendant. Her strong attachment to her young mistress induced her to linger with them to the last. She often spoke of her native village, and of her Aunt, who lived there, and the idea struck Fanny that it might afford them a home, as quiet and as cheap as their circumstances required. She soon obtained all the requisite information, and, finding that the said Aunt had two rooms which she was glad to let—wrote to say that her mother would take them, and that they might be expected at the end of the week. Mrs. Beaumont complained bitterly of the haste in which the arrangement was made, but the absolute necessity of leaving their own house silenced, if it did not satisfy, her. Mary went with them to the coach, and the tears of the affectionate girl were the only ones shed at the departure of those who had so recently been the centre of so gay and brilliant a circle.

But Mr. and Mrs. Beaumont had abused their prosperity. They had attached no one by the ties of kindness and gratitude. They had aimed only at worldly success, and at the time of trouble it was truly a reed that pierced those who leant on it for support.

CHAPTER III.

Poor little Edith was the only one to whom the journey gave any pleasure. But to one whose chief source of enjoyment was in what she saw, the coaches, the moving fields, and hedges, the various towns through which they passed, were constant amusement.

The smile with which, at every new object, she sought her sister's eye, was Fanny's only consolation. She was thankful, too, that there was no one but themselves in the coach, so that Mrs. Beaumont's complainings reached no ear but her own.

The high road did not pass within some three miles of the secluded village, which was henceforth to be their home, but the housemaid had given them sufficient directions, and the coach stopped at the corner of a shadowy lane, which led to Sherban—a man and a cart were there stationed waiting their arrival.

It was a relief to the whole party to alight weary alike of the perpetual motion and the confinement of the stage. The lane was green and shadowy, and the hedges filled with the sweetness of the late violets. A soft uncertain wind shook the branches, the only sound that disturbed the deep tranquillily of the scene. There were large clouds floating on the sky,

but as yet the sunshine rested in all its brightness on the little open space that bordered the highway with its two old elms.

Mrs. Beaumont took the hand of the little Edith and sauntered a few paces along the turf, leaving Fanny to make all the necessary arrangements.

Poor child, for she was but a child in years, though the bitter cares of the world had come upon her thus early—she had acquired the experience of life in a few weeks.

Brought up only to the exercise of graceful accomplishment, accustomed to attendance and indulgence, she had suddenly found the necessity of exertion. She had learnt not only to do every-thing for herself—but much for others—While the desertion of so many former friends had given her a harsh lesson of self-dependance, she had yet met some unexpected kindness—and hope is so easily encouraged in youth. Her shyness, for that she found impossible to conquer, seemed only natural, in one so young and lovely, and the sweetness inseparable from her temper secured universal civility.

Their small store of luggage was soon placed in the cart, and a comfortable seat, as she hoped, formed for her mother—but here an unexpected difficulty arose. Mrs. Beaumont turned angrily away, declaring "that it was quite impossible for her to ride in cart."

Fanny did not endeavour to convince, she only endeavoured to persuade.

Fortunately a dark cloud came to her assistance, and the fear of rain did more than all her entreaties—they took their seats, and Mrs. Beaumont's sullen silence gradually yielded to her daughter's influence—who would not be discouraged from conversation. She drew her mother's attention to the delight of her little Edith, to the loveliness of the country around; and at last Mrs. Beaumont passed her arm round her neck, and said "You are a dear girl, and that is the truth of it, Fanny." Tears swelled in the eyes of the affectionate child—those few kind words more than repaid her.

The shadows had lengthed around, and only a few of the further cottage windows on the hill retained the crimson radiance of the setting sun, when they arrived at Sarah Wilmot's. Fanny had induced her mother to get out before they came to the house. She had learned, while walking up one of the hills, from the man who drove them, that there was a path through the field which led to a back gate in the garden, at the style therefore they alighted—all were glad to be in motion, the heaviness on the air had passed away, leaving only a refreshing coolness behind.

The hedge, by whose side the foot-path wound, was covered with that rich growth of leaf and bloom which marks the delicious season when spring is deepening into summer,

At every step Edith stopped, to gather some new treasure, till her little arms were filled with flowers,

while her large dark eyes turned to her companions with such an eloquent expression of delight, that the silence of her mouth was forgotten. The whole party felt the influence of the cheerful scene, and when they reached the small parlour, where the tea was prepared, it was with a sensation of rest and hope to which they had long been strangers. Edith was quite ready to enjoy her bread and honey, and Mrs. Beaumont was pleased with the respectful civility of the neat old woman who received them. The room was small but delicately clean, and the honey-suckle that peeped in at the lattice was now at its sweetest, with the evening dew exhaling from its fragrant tendrils.

They had been accustomed to so much wretchedness of late, to confusion, to civility, and to noise, that only the pleasant side of the contrast in their present situation was what struck them. The next day, however. Mrs. Beaumont discovered that their two rooms were wretchedly small, that she had no French rolls for breakfast, and that she could not see herself in the small square glass which hung beside the window, serving as the mirror. These were but small vexations, but we all know how small vexations become great ones when perpetually dwelt upon. From the first, Fanny began the habit of early rising. At first, Mrs. Beaumont complained bitterly of being herself disturbed, but when she found Fanny never undrew the curtains, and asked it as a favour, she became reconciled, and it may be doubted whether, af-

ter a few mornings, she even heard the light step that was so carefully subdued. It was for her sake that her daughter was so anxious to get up. She soon found that the girl, employed by Sarah Wilmot, had more to do than she could get through, and was both awkward and stupid in getting through with it. Fanny resolved to take all the preparations for breakfast on herself. She soon found her way to the kitchen, at first to old Sarah's great dismay, and not a little to her own embarrassment, but, after two or three failures, she succeeded to admiration. Henceforth her sister's bread and milk, and her mother's coffee, were made by herself.

With my poor little Edith she had at first the greatest difficuty—she had been sadly spoilt. Her cruel misfortune had made it seem almost harsh ever to restrain her. The natural weakness of Mr. Beaumont's temper had given way to every possible bad habit, rather than be at the trouble of correction, and of late the unfortunate child had been neglected in every way. Edith did not choose to get up, and Fanny neither liked to disturb her mother by any noise of contention, nor to make her sister rise merely by compulsion. But Edith, though violent in temper, had an affectionate heart, and where that exists it may always be worked upon to good. Very quick in her apprehensions, she soon saw that her sister was always actively employed, and the desire arose to assist her. Fanny exhausted her ingenuity in contriving a thousand ways of wanting her services.

The pride of usefulness led, as it ever does, to the most beneficial results, and Edith became anxious to get up in the morning, that she might help her sister. An errand was next found to employ her. Hitherto the girl had fetched the milk of a morning: after going with her once, herself, to see that there was no danger that she could incur, Fanny in future sent her sister for it. The child was delighted with the office she had a pleasant walk across the field, and the farmer's wife, a thoroughly good-hearted woman thought that she could never make enough of the beautiful and afflicted child. Edith brought home the milk with due care, but she had almost always to run back again for some fruit, flowers, honey, or cake, which her new friends had offered her.

Edith's health and temper became equally improved, and, even in the very heat of anger, a word or a look from her sister would soften her at once. But it was over Mrs. Beaumont that Fanny's interest was the most remarkable and advantageous. Her mother could not devolve every difficulty upon her, as she did, without an unconcious respect for the strength of mind displayed by one so young; yet, thanks to Fanny's sweetnesss, this was attended by none of that bitterness which too often attends such a change in the natural position of child and parent. But Mrs. Beaumont could not but see that her ease and her amusement were every thing to her affectionate daughter; while Fanny had never loved her mother so well as now that she was her chief object, and her

renewed cheerfulness the great reward of her constant exertions. Mrs. Beaumont had always been fond of work, it was now a great resource; and it soon became an amusement to teach Etith, whose quickness of apprehension was surprising.

They had been some time resident in the village, when Fanny one evening was in the kitchen engaged in washing the tea-things, a task she had taken upon herself, when she observed that their hostess, instead of seizing with her usual delight the opportunity for a little chat, remained in what seemed a very disconsolate silence. Fanny saw that more than once the tears rise to the old woman's eyes. She could not see this without an attempt at consolation; she took her hand, and asked her kindly what was the matter. The poor old creature was ready enough to talk of her troubles, she said that her son had been offered a situation as shopman in the next market town.

"It is a great thing for him, Miss, but—"

"You do not like to part with him. But the distance is not great, and it is for his good."

"That is what I say to myself, and to him too, but he won't let me talk about it."

She then went on to explain that her son, for she herself could neither write nor read, had been in the habit of keeping the accounts of her little business, and that, without his assistance, it was impossible for her to get on at all.

The thought instantly darted into Fanny's head could she not supply his place? She had felt for

some time that what her mother paid was a very inadequate return for the trouble which, in spite of her personal efforts, they gave, and for the comfort which they enjoyed. Here was an opportunity of amply acquitting the obligation, she was a good accountant at school; for, by reason of the necessity of order in their own arrangement, she had of late rather improved than otherwise. Mrs. Wilmot's shop was nominally to sell grocery, but it sold almost everything else: the old woman, whose activity and obligingness were provervial, attended to her customers herself, and of an evening her son regulated the accounts of the day. The profits were sufficient to enable her to live in great comfort, and the decent education which she had contrived to afford her son had been already repaid by his dutiful affection, and assistance. But it was time now for him to be doing something more, he was growing up to manhood, and the present situation was one beyond his hopes. The last tea-cup was washed, and Fanny had taken her resolution; she drew a stool close to the arm-chair, and communicated her project. "I can cast up accounts very well, and your son can put me in the way of doing yours."

The old woman was at first silent from excess of astonishment.

"A young lady like yourself!" was her almost inarticulate reply: but at length she began to comprehend the possibility, and her surprise was next equalled by her gratitude.

That very evening, Fanny took her lesson. The matter had even more difficulty than she expected, for Sarah's own memorandums were hieroglyphics in chalk, that required practice indeed to decipher them. By dint of the most persevering attention she conquered all the difficulties, and not one of the least was her mother's objection, who saw in the employ a degradation. Fanny would only let her think of its utility and its kindness.

We have alluded to Edith's morning walk, to fetch milk, it led to far more important consequences. The farmer had the care of the only large house in the neighbourhood. It had the history belonging to so many. Its proprietors were living in a foreign land, too embarrassed to return to their own, yet unable or unwilling to part with the noble old place which had been theirs so long. Edith first, and Fanny afterwards, accompanied the farmer's wife on her periodical visits for airing the deserted rooms. There was a large library, and from its dusty shelves they soon obtained permission to take what they pleased, on condition that one set of books were returned to their places, before others were brought away.

Here was indeed a treasure of delight and information. Fanny, who, like all active minds, had still many hours of the day unemployed, found here an invaluable and constant resource. She had often secretly regretted how all the advantages of her earlier education were being thrown away, but here was an opportunity for the cultivation of her mental

powers. Without suffering her new found enjoyment to interfere with her more active duties, she read a great deal, and one book, with a passion of hope and pleasure: it was the Abbé Siéye's work on the instruction of the deaf and dumb. It opened a field of expectation, on which she had before scarcely allowed herself to think. A little practice soon brought experience to her aid, and in a few months she was astonished at her sister's progress.

Edith had a natural talent for drawing, and it was extraordinary how much this facilitated her progress: gradually she learnt to read; then to write, and she acquired an extraordinary facility in sketching any object on the minute. A small slate which she carried constantly about with her became an easy means of communication with all, while to her mother and sister she could talk on her fingers with the greatest rapidity. All this however was the work of time, for nearly five years had passed since they first sought the distant and quiet village.

They had been five years of content and employment. Mrs. Beaumont's health, though never strong, was better than it had ever been before, and her two children were pictures of youth and loveliness. But even the lowliest degree of content has its changes, and the smaller, even as the greater, portion in life has its trouble. The trifling sum which they had so husbanded was gradually drawing to a close: a new shop, opened at the other extremity of the village, had drawn away much of old Sarah's custom, who

was daily more desirous of going to reside with her son. His success in life had been the fitting reward of his industry and good conduct. It was fortunate for Mrs. Beaumont that, accustomed to depend wholly on Fanny, she took every thing for granted. When once used to their present mode of life, she supposed, as she had done of their former prosperity, that it would go on so always. She had no foresight. But Fanny's anxiety increased every hour. For the first time she felt utterly depressed, she saw no possible means of earning even the most miserable pittance. She envied the labourers she saw working in the fields. Night after night, she buried her face in her sleepless pillow, lest her sister should perceive her tears.

One day Edith had been to the old manor house, and was returning slowly up the steep hill which led to their village, when she was overtaken by a gentleman, who had for some minutes past been calling to her to learn his way. The light touch on her shoulder drew her attention in a minute. She startled, and, while a beautiful colour came into her face, fixed her dark eyes on his face, and perceived by the movement of his lips that he was speaking. She raised her graceful hands, but saw at once that he did not understand the rapid motion of her fingers. Then taking her slate, which hung on her arm, she wrote on it, "I am deaf and dumb, but I can read what you write." With a sweet smile she gave her touching confession to the stranger. The emotion

with which he let the slate fall from his hand was beyond mere pity. With an expression of the tenderest interest he gazed on the lovely countenance that, animated and intelligent, met his own. "And is this sweet child so afflicted also?" exclaimed he in a broken voice.

He could not command himself enough to write the question he meant to ask, and Edith's quick eye noted the changes of his face, and was naturally struck with the idea of indisposition; she, happy in the cheerful affection of her mother and sister, knew not all the sympathy that she inspired. Again she took up her slate and wrote "Are you ill, our house is very near, if your will rest there?" Mr. Bennett, for such was the stranger's name, had now composed himself, but his curiosity and a deeper feeling were alike excited by his companion, he therefore wrote down his thanks, saying "that he had lost his way, and would be glad to follow his present guide."

The horse, whose bridle was thrown over his arm, now attracted Edith's attention, and a conversation was soon commenced, and carried on, by the medium of the slate. They arrived at the litttle cottage, and Edith ran in to announce their unexpected visitor. A boy was soon found to hold Mr. Bennett's horse, while he accepted Mrs. Beaumont's offer of rest and refreshment. The conversation was interesting to both parties. It was so long since Mrs. Beaumont had had a visitor of any kind that she could not help enjoying the novelty, and Mr. Bennett was equally

struck with her lady-like manner, and Fanny's singular loveliness. He asked many questions about Edith. "You will pardon," said he, "my dwelling on this painful subject, but I have two children afflicted in a similar manner."

This was too strong a bond of sympathy not to draw even strangers closely together, and when, after a visit of considerable length, he expressed his intention of taking whatever accommodation the little village inn could afford, Mrs. Beaumont begged him to renew his visit—and it was at last settled that he should take an early breakfast with them.

It was late, very late, that night before Fanny closed her eyes, her head was full of a project that had suggested itself, but which cost her many a bittter plan to even attempt executing. She resolved every possible, we might say, impossible, chance of alleviating their situation, and she could find but one, and that was to go out as governess. It was a dreary prospect, for it must separate her from a mother and sister whom she loved, as we love those to whom we are every thing in the world.

How would Mrs. Beaumont bear up when separated from the daughter who was her resource and support in every-thing? How would poor Edith bear her loss, and yet on that poor afflicted child was her chief dependence. She had taught her to read, write, and draw, and Edith could now get on by herself; not as she would have done with her sister always by her side, but still enough for instruction and em-

ployment. Moreover, there would always be a companion for her mother, one who, if she could not amuse her like Fanny, would yet always be at hand to do those little offices which were to Mrs. Beaumont quite indispensable.

The first red light of morning was stealing through the lattice, and Fanny raised herself on her arm to gaze on her sleeping sister. The long dark lash rested on the pale cheek which looked so placid and composed, while the warm light played round it, like a blessing.

In moments of great anxiety there is a sort of natural superstition about the heart, which the reason rejects in cooler moments.

Fanny, for an instant, watched that cheerful ray as if it were a good omen—She thought with increased confidence of Edith's docility and intelligence, and hope grew strong within her that Heaven would protect a creature so innocent and so helpless.

Fanny started from a short, but deep, slumber, as the sunshine came full on the window, and hurried up, to make the needful preparations. The room was prepared, and breakfast ready before their guest arrived, but even then, as Fanny had anticipated, her mother was not come down, and this gave her an opportunity for the conversation she had planned with Mr. Bennett. He took a seat by the window, and entered at once into conversation. But the thoughts of his young hostess, after the first civilities had passed were too busy to enable her to sustain her part,

and her visitor at last become silent, evidently a little vexed at the failure of all his efforts to encourage her —Suddenly making a strong resolve to subdue her feelings, Fanny rose from the table where she had been seated, and, approaching Mr. Bennett, said in a faltering voice "Sir, I am going to ask a favour, it will not be very much trouble, and I have not a friend in the world, unless I can make one of a stranger, you seem very kind;" but here her utterance failed, and the tears came so fast to her eyes that she could no longer check them, she was soon re-assured by the extreme kindness of Mr. Bennett's manner, and in a few words explained their unfortunate circumstances, and her own wish to obtain a situation as governess.

"We have lost sight," continued she, "of all our former friends, but a little enquiry will satisfy you of the truth of my story, and the Lady who educated me at Brighton would, I am sure, speake kindly of me."

"That you can obtain such a situation," replied Mr. Bennett, "there is no doubt, and as my own circle is large, I feel sure that I can serve you."

"God bless you," exclaimed the grateful girl, when, hearing the door open of Mrs. Beaumont's room, she hastily added, "say nothing of my plan to my mother. It will be bard enough to bear when it succeeds, let me spare her all unhappyness beforehand."

Mr. Bennett had only time to look a reply, when Mrs. Beaumont entered the little parlour. During breakfast, Mr. Bennett had ample time to admire the self-control which Fanny had so early learnt to practise.

Her young heart was swelling with anxiety, and even then she was anticipating all the bitterness of parting, yet she suppressed all outward sign of what she felt, she was even more attentive than usual to the courtisies of the breakfast table; and, if a little silent, she nevertheless answered the questions addressed to her by Mr. Bennett with equal intelligence and grace. The meal was soon dispatched, for their guest was in haste, and both Fanny and Edith accompanied him till actually in the direct line of his route.

During the walk, Mr. Bennett put many questions, and ended by assuring Fanny tha she should soon hear from him, and he hoped satisfactorily. Fanny listened to the sounds of his horse's feet, as he galloped down the green lane, with mingled pain and pleasure: it seemed as if they were the first notes of separation between herself and all she loved in the world; yet the idea of the aid she might thereby give supported her, and the small domestic troubles which daily increased distracted her attention: she had not courage to mention her plan to her mother, but, aware how much in future must depend on her sister, she resolved on telling her. Child as she was, Edith proved worthy of the care that had been bestowed upon her, and the confidence now reposed.

They were taking their favourite walk in a small oak coppice near, when Fanny called her attention from the wild flowers, which she was gathering, and told her of their future plans. At first it was too

much for Edith's philosophy, she listened in pale dismay, and then, dashing herself down on the grass, gave way to a passionate burst of crying; all Fanny could do was to raise her head, and cry too.

"I am setting you a bad example," at last ex claimed the elder sister, and Edith, seeing that her lips moved, remained with her eyes fixed on her face, and unclasping her hands, traced a few words hastily on the slate that hung at her wrist: "My sister, I shall die, and so will Mamma, if you leave us." Fanny clasped the little affectionate creature in her arms, and, taking her hand, walked towards the open fields. The fresh air, the glad open sunshine revived her, she relied on the care of Heaven which spread so brightly over all around, she then explained to her sister the necessity of their situation, the absolute necessity of some support, and perhaps expressed a little more hope than she really felt of everything turning out for the best. "You must," said she, "take my place with my mother, you must dress her, and be housekeeper and every-thing, I know I can trust my little Edith."

The child swallowed down her tears, and turned to her sister with a stedfast, earnest look, "Let me dress Mamma to-morrow," asked she, and the slight fingers were tolerably steady while asking.

The next morning Mrs. Beaumont was down rather earlier than usual, and found Fanny, as had been settled, very busy over her work. "I shall dismiss you

from my service," said she smiling, "for Edith is so handy, and I know how much there is to do."

"I shall grow jealous," replied Fanny, forcing a laugh, and from that time Edith took her place. This was a great point gained, for Mrs. Beaumont required many little personal services, which Fanny had feared her sister with her infirmity, would be incapable of rendering. A fortnight of anxious expectation past by: the fortnight became three weeks, and Fanny found herself at the end of their carefully hoarded pittance, and Mrs. Beaumont had, from finding Sarah crying in the garden, and questioning her, learnt the old woman's wish to give up the shop and cottage. She hurried to the parlor where she had left Fanny at work, and found the poor girl worn out both in mind and body, crying bitterly. This was too much for Mrs. Beaumont, and Fanny was roused from her own painful indulgence, by seeing her mother in strong hysterics. Caresses and entreaties at length restored her, and Fanny took the opportunity of telling what her own hopes were. This seemed only making matters worse: "If you leave, what will become of us?" said her mother wringing her hands.

"If I stay, we shall starve; my obtaining a situation as a governess is our only resource against absolute want," replied Fanny gently, but firmly.—"Dearest mother, do not deny me the happiness of working for you. I hope our separation will not be long, and Edith will always be with you."

"Oh my child, how I shall miss you," and again

Mrs. Beaumont gave way to her tears. Gradually she became more composed, and Fanny thenceforth made her approaching departure the constant subject of discourse. When once Mrs. Beaumont considered it as inevitable, she grew even anxious about it, and, for the next three days, she harrassed both Fanny and herself with misgivings as to Mr. Bennett's forgetfulness. The fourth evening came and still no letter; when, just as Mrs. Beaumont was saying "Ah Fanny, it is of no use hoping, nobody cares for us now," a parcel was brought in addressed to her. It was opened with trembling eagerness, and, among other things, Fanny saw a letter inscribed to herself. The contents ran thus:

"My dear young Friend,

"My long silence, occasioned by severe illness, has I fear led you to suppose that I had forgotten the interest that I had expressed in your situation: as soon as you mentioned what your wishes for the future were, a plan occurred to me which I trusted might prove mutually agreeable. Mrs. Bennett agrees with myself in thinking our little girls will be most fortunate if placed under your care. She has herself written to you. Will you permit me to enclose the accompanying trifle for the expenses of your journey?

"With every expression of esteem and respect,

"I remain your sincere friend,

"Robert Bennett."

The bank note for twenty pounds, and the letter,

dropped from her hand, in an agony of mute thankfulness—it was far beyond her hopes, and she felt as if regret would be ingratitude to Providence.

Edith had watched every turn of her face, while Mrs. Beaumont was employed in examining the contents of the parcel.

She caught up the letter, read it, and grew deadly pale, the tears rose in her eyes, but she did not shed them, she only drew close to Fanny, and kissed her, as much as to say, "You see you may trust me." Fanny commanded her voice sufficiently to read the letter aloud, and in the relief from the fear of destitution, Mrs. Baumont bore the idea of parting with her daughter better than could have been expected. The parcel itself too distracted her attention.

Its arrival was an event in a life so monotonous as their's. It contained a handsome shawl for herself, brown merino dresses for the two girls, some various silks and worsteds, which showed that the kind donor had noted Mrs. Beaumont's own employ, a variety of books, a box of colors, pencils, and a kind note to Edith.

The kindness was felt even more than the service. There was also another note addressed to Miss Beaumont, in a lady's hand. She broke the pale lilac seal and read the contents.

"Mrs. Bennett informs Miss Beaumont that, in consequence of Mrs. Cameron's recommendation, she is willing to give her a trial, though she thinks Miss B. very young.

"Mrs. Bennett begs no time may be lost, as she is going to Brighton and wants the children settled first. She will give Miss B. the same salary as her predecessor, a hundred guineas, though she must say it is a large sum for such a young person: but Mrs. Cameron says that Miss Beaumont is highly accomplished, hopes that they have not been lost in the country.—Will Miss Beaumont write to fix what day she will arrive, as the housekeeper is to meet her."

It was not the utter want of elegance in this even unlady-like note, but it was its want of any thing like encouragement. At that moment Fanny felt the full bitterness of the task she had undertaken. She would not think of this, she turned at once to the blessing of being able to support her mother, and just read enough of the note to fix attention on the amount of the salary, and the necessity of her immediate departure. Her plan had been for sometime arranged in her own mind, and no obstacles intervened.

It was agreed that Mrs. Beaumont and Edith were to live at the farm-house we had before mentioned, and Fanny had the satisfaction of seeing them comfortably settled.

"I know," said Edith, (we use the expression *say*, to avoid perpetual recurrence to her methods of expression, which were either by talking on her fingers, or writing on her slate:) "that you are afraid Mamma will miss you, and so she must, but it shall not be for want of care. Dearest sister, I will do just as if you were here with me, and as Mr. Bennett says I may

always write under cover to him, I will tell you every thing I do. Fanny at that moment had less resolution than even her little sister, and the child went on:

"I will keep a journal and send you every week. My darling Fanny, I know how good you have been God will bless us both for your sake."

With what lingering steps that evening did they wander round "the old familiar places!" The old hedge, now filled with honeysuckle, the bank beneath the ash tree, where a few late violets yet lingered, the clear and dancing brook, where they had so often gathered water-cresses; every object had now that charm which invests even the commonest thing when seen for the last time.

The next day, it was fortunate that all was hurry and confusion, there was only just time for Fanny to get her few packages ready, and to be at the end of the green lane just as the coach was sweeping down the hill in the distance. Such a long journey, and by herself too, was an awful thing to any girl, especially to one who had lived in such complete seclusion and fear, mixed with the sorrow that made Fanny's voice at parting quite inarticulate. Neither Mrs. Beaumont nor Edith could restrain their tears, and even the farmer's wife who accompanied them cried for sympathy. Slowly they returned home, to miss Fanny at every turn.

The room did not seem the same, her place was vacant. The next morning Edith was up with the lark, and stole from the bed as softly as the bird from

its nest, so fearful was she of disturbing her mother, and of not having every thing nicely prepared.

"Lord love the poor little thing," said their new hostess as she watched her bring in the flowers and water-cresses with which she laid out the breakfast table, and then make the coffee with a skill which many a London drawing room might have envied.

"What a handy child it is, but we must help all we can, and without seeming to do it."

But a letter from Edith to her sister will give exact description of how they passed their time.

"It is but a week, for I have counted every day, since I saw the coach take you away, my dearest Fanny, but it has been a very long week. Everything makes us miss you—yesterday we walked past old Sarah's shop. It is shut up, and the sight made Mamma cry so, that she went to bed quite ill. I shall take care not to walk that way again except by myself.

"I will tell you just how a day passes. I get up at seven, go as usual to see the cows milked, and drink my own little cup-ful. I then go home, get the breakfast ready for Mamma, and read till she comes, and then we sit down together; after the breakfast things are washed and put away, we go and walk for an hour before the sun is on the lane. Then Mamma and I work in the window, and she reads, till it is time to lay the cloth for dinner. After that she lies down, and I go into the arbour in the garden, where there is now a wooden table. For the next

hour I am trying to teach Hannah, and Mary, to write and count, but they don't learn very fast. To be sure, you will say that they have not had time. Mary too is teaching me to plait straw, and I like doing it very much.

"Then I get the tea ready, and, Mamma and I take another walk, but I walk more than she does.

"Then I read till bed-time, or talk to Mamma, but I am afraid she misses your reading aloud to her.

"Ah, dear Fanny, I wish we were as rich as we have been! but there are many poor children starving, and, if I could see you, I should be quite happy. Mamma says I may give her love, but she is going to write the last page herself. Good bye dear, dear, Fanny,

"Your affectionate sister,

"EDITH BEAUMONT."

In the mean time, Fanny proceeded on her long and cheerless journey, without however meeting the slightest adventure.

Her own sweet and gentle manner everywhere won her civility, and, after two very fatiguing days, she arrived safely in London, where the house-keeper was waiting to meet her. She was a quiet, civil person, very careful of her young charge, and a coach, which was soon procured, conveyed them to Mr. Bennett's house in Harley street. She was shown at once to her own room, but had scarcely time for either rest or refreshment before she was summoned to tea.

With a beating heart and a faltering step, she entered the magnificent drawing-room, where every thing swam before her eyes. She was a little reassured by Mr. Bennett coming kindly forward, and taking her hand: he led her to a lady who was thrown back in a large arm chair. "This, my dear, is Miss Beaumont, of whom I have had so much pleasure in talking to you."

Mrs. Bennett rather stared than looked at the new comer: apparently the survey was any thing but satisfactory, for, in a very peevish tone, she exclaimed —rather to her husband than to Fanny—

"Why do you keep her standing—there, Miss—Miss, what is your name, is a chair close by." Well for Fanny was it that the chair did stand close by, for she almost sank upon it, appalled at her reception.

A dead silence prevailed for some minutes, broken by Mrs. Bennett's asking her husband some trifling question, to which he made no reply. Silence again prevailed, and to Miss Beaumont's great relief, Mrs. Bennett addressed her very civilly, as to whether she had not found her journey fatiguing—"You will not see your pupils till to-morrow, they are in bed, and glad enough everybody is when they are there."

The carriage was announced, but while putting on her cloak, Mrs. Bennett begged that Fanny would ring for any thing she wanted.

"Indeed, my dear, you must make yourself quite at home."

Mr. Bennett wished her a cordial good night, and

Fanny heard the street door close before she had recovered her surprise at the change in the lady's manner.

It was a new and weary lesson that Fanny had to learn in the experience of Mrs. Bennett's temper. A vain, weak, and selfish woman, every fault had increased with an uninterrupted course of worldly prosperity, and she had no kindliness, no natural generosity to counteract her violent and over-bearing disposition.

It required all her husband's calm, and even severe, good sense to obtain any influence; but she feared him, she knew that it was in his power to curtail her enjoyments, and if selfishness gave way to petulance at first, the same selfishness soon controlled it.

She saw that her husband was justly displeased at her reception of the friendless and interesting girl whose situation would have called forth kindness from almost any one else, she felt no pity for Fanny, but she thought that Mr. Bennett might decline fulfilling their evening engagement; and, having vented her spleen at seeing her so very lovely, thought that some show of politeness was necessary to propitiate her husband.

It was with a heavy heart that Fanny rose the next morning. The dull parapet, the gloomy roofs of the houses, was any thing but a cheering spectacle. She missed the glad sunshine, the buoyant morning air that was wont to come in from the open casement of their little cottage. The noise, to which

she had been so long unaccustomed, quite bewildered her, and the gloom seemed infectious. She soon dressed, and a servant came to conduct her to the school-room, where so much of her future life was to be passed. It was a large dull room, the bars before the window giving it almost the look of a prison, and a large iron fender destroying even the cheerfulness of the fire. By that fire the two children were seated, who slowly turned round their dull and sullen faces. Fanny went up to them, and tried to take a hand of each. They started back, making an inarticulate and frightful sound; the one pushed against the other, who immediately struck her sister, and a complete battle ensued. The servant parted them, and, turning to Miss Beaumont, said, "They are little furies, Miss, I shall be glad enough to have done with them."

Breakfast was now brought, and the two children began to eat ravenously, and without the least regard even to decency. Fanny vainly endeavoured to make them imitate her movements, the least interference only produced the same discordant mutter, and attempts at blows: after the meal was over, they appeared to have no idea of either employment or amusement, excepting scrambling amid a profusion of broken toys, or climbing up to look out of the window. At last however Fanny began to draw figures on a sheet of paper; this attracted their attention, the one pushed the other, but Matilda the eldest, obtained the mastery, and Susan was elbowed from

the table. Fanny seized the opportunity of giving her first lesson in obedience. She showed the figures to Susan, and, after a little while, let her show them to Matilda. She next made them come to the table quietly together, and finished by dividing the drawings between them. At one o'clock they were summoned to Mrs. Bennett's dressing-room, who received the unfortunate children with ill-disguised disgust; and Miss Beaumont with coldness.

"I suppose," said she, half yawning, "you won't want much in the school-room; indeed I don't know what you are to teach; you can give me a list of anything you want; and I suppose Mr. Bennett will choose you to have it." After this ungracious interview they went out for their walk, a service of no small difficulty, as the children were not under the least control. They then returned, and the afternoon passed in much the same way as the morning.

Fanny was indeed thankful when eight o'clock came, and the children went to bed. Sad, wearied out both in body and mind, she sat down by the fire, and was startled from her gloomy reverie by the servant bringing in the tray with her supper. It was the first solitary meal she had ever taken, and now it departed untouched. Such for the two succeeding years was the daily journal of Fanny Beaumont's life. Now and then Mr. Bennett would send to ask her to join their circle, but Mrs. Bennett's ill humor was so visible and so sure to lead to petty annoyance the following day, that Fanny almost always excused her-

self. Such for two years was the dull and lonely life of a girl singularly lovely and accomplished; she had the comfort of supporting her mother, but that comfort was her only one. The children who were confided to her care were perfectly untractable, the commonest domestic, who was kind, and honest, would have done all that she could do, she felt that her energies and talents were alike wasted, she had none of the pleasures of youth, and but little hope for the future.

One morning, while making the daily visit to Mrs. Bennett's dressing-room, that lady said in a tone of more than usual civility, "I should be much obliged, Miss Beaumont, by your giving up your room next week. The heiress, Miss Elphinstone is coming to stay with us, and her maid must have a room with a fire-place." Fanny of course assented, but it was with a bitter feeling of comparison.

The name of Elphinstone called up her school-days, and she could not but contrast her present and former situation. Then she was loved, caressed, the favourite of her own happy little circle—now she was dependant and lonely and forgotten.

The arrival of Miss Elphinstone was obviously an event in the Harley Street household.

All sorts of preparations were made, and Fanny was surprised one morning by a request from Mrs. Bennett to come to her in the dressing room. She found that it was to write out the cards of an invitation for a splendid ball to be given in honour of the

visitor. The important day of the heiress's arrival at last came, the whole house in a commotion, for Mrs. Bennett, like all vulgar minded people, delighted in bustle.

Fanny soon heard enough from the maid who attended the children to be nearly sure that the visitor was the little Emeline who had been her pet at school, and her heart warmed at the thought of seeing a friend. But the hope was vain, for Miss Elphinstone never came near her. A week passed, and it was now the night of the ball, and the courted and flattered heiress had never found a single moment to bestow on her former kind friend. Fanny felt the neglect bitterly, a single affectionate word would have been such a happiness to one so lonely.

It was late, and she sat down by the heavy iron fender in the school-room. All around her was life and gaiety, she could hear the perpetual rattle of the carriages, and the prolonged knocks at the door, while nearer still came the sound of music. She could distinguish a favourite waltz, it was the last that she had ever danced, she had seen little Emeline Elphinstone dance it that very day which had ended so unfortunately to herself.

"I should have come to see her," thought Fanny; and she felt the neglect of her former protegé more keenly than all the privations which she was now enduring.

Yet it was a hard trial for any young girl, to sit by herself in that gloomy school room, hearing the

gaiety so near! poor Fanny could not help conjuring up the scene to herself, the light, the flowers, and the dancers.

With the over sensitiveness of a singularly affectionate heart, it seemed as if the natural regret were selfish. She would not repine at any sacrifice made for the sake of her mother and sister. How long it was since they had met! "Ah," exclaimed Fanny "if we could but have lived on in our little cottage, how happy we should have been. My own little Edith, when shall I see you again!" The tears that had been swellowed down with affectionate shame, now rose into her eyes, and Fanny scarcely heard the carriages or the music, while the image of her darling sister rose before her: she was roused from her reverie by the school-room door, and to her astonishment saw a young lady enter bearing a light in her hand. She was drest in white satin which showed to advantage her tall and elegant figure, while a wreath of scarlet flowers contrasted the rich folds of her thick black hair. A chain of gold was round her neck, from which hung a diamond cross, and there was something so brilliant about her whole appearance that Fanny, though she rose, remained silent. She almost expected the bright apparition to vanish.

"I beg your pardon for this intrusion," said the unexpected visitor, "but I wanted my wreath altered, for it hurts my head. I could make no one hear in my own room, and set off in search of my maid: I

lost my way, and, seeing a light, ventured to come in."

"Can I be of any use!" said Fanny.

"Why, to own the truth, I shall be thankfull for any assistance," and as she went to sit down, she placed her candle on the table, so that the light fell full on Fanny's face: the stranger started from her seat. "No, impossible, yes it is Fanny, Fanny Beaumont, oh, I know it is herself," and, forgetting wreath and every thing else, she flung her arms round her neck, and almost sobbed out incoherent expressions of joy and surprise.

Fanny was too amazed for words, and her companion was the first to recover herself. "Do you not recollect me," asked she half crying, half laughing, "Emeline Elphinstone?"

"Emeline, my little Emeline," exclaimed Fanny: she could not, in the tall, graceful, and very handsome girl who stood before her, find a single trace of the little girl whom she had once petted.

"Why I am taller than you now," said the other, enjoying her surprise. "Oh, how I have tried to find you out, since I came from France, but I never could discover any thing about you: only think of that odious Mrs. Bennett never naming you. What does she keep you shut up here for?"

"You did not know then that I was governess to the children."

"Governess!" cried Miss Elphinstone; "do you

think that I should have been here a week without seeing you if I had had the most remote idea of it. I heard that there were two children heavily afflicted, and of course avoided any enquiry. Ah, I see how it is, you are too pretty."

Fanny blushed, and added, "But I must not keep you here, you will be missed."

"Very true," replied the other, "and, as my father's friend, I would not affront Mr. Bennett: but I have so much to say to you. Do you mind sitting up? Come with me to my room, I must leave you there; I shall say good night as soon as I can, down stairs, and you can, in the meantime, take a nap on the sofa."

"But Mrs. Bennett will be angry."

"I do not care for the unreasonable anger of any one. Besides she won't be angry with me, so come; it is only reversing old times. I used to mind you, and now you must mind me."

Miss Elphinstone waited no further denial, but hurried her prize off to her own apartment. It was a little pretty room fitted up with every possible luxury, trinkets, toys, books and flowers were scattered in every direction.

She drew an arm chair to the fire, threw a large Indian shawl round Fanny, placed a table near: "You used to like reading," said she, pointing to the volumes upon it. "Now, be a good child, and wait patiently till I return, which shall be as soon as pos-

sible. Really I must now hurry off, Mrs. Bennett, else, will insist that I have run away."

"But your wreath, let me alter it," said Fanny.

"I had forgotten all about it," replied the other, and stooping down, she had it loosened. "It is not the first time that you have dressed me," said Emeline, with a grateful and affectionate look. The door closed after her, and Fanny looked round the small luxurious apartment with a feeling of bewilderment. The last half hour seemed like a dream. She had again heard kind words, again been treated with affection. It was not much, but her heart bounded with enjoyment.

Two hours passed rapidly away, and soon after Miss Elphinstone appeared, accompanied by her maid bringing in a tray of refreshments:

"You see, I have taken care you shall not be starved. Now, take a sandwich and some jelly, while Fanchette undresses me with all possible rapidity."

The two friends were soon seated over the fire, and each began their mutual history. Miss Elphinstone's had been one unbroken course of prosperity. Her father had come to Europe to recover his health, she had joined him within six months of Fanny's leaving school in the south of France. There and at Paris she had remained, till the last twelve-month. "Ever since we came to England—I can safely say, you have never been out of my head a day. I have asked in every quarter I could discover. Little did I think when I came so reluctantly on this visit, that here I

was to find you." It was now so late that they were obliged to separate, but as Fanny rose to go, Miss Elphinstone said,

"You had better think of packing up, for I tell you fairly—I leave here to-morrow, and you must accompany me. Now do not even look hesitation. Remember, I am such a spoiled child now that I will have my own way. Henceforth you are my sister," and, with a little gentle violence, she half pushed Fanny out of the room, to prevent an answer.

Miss Elphinstone soon fell asleep, full of pity and wonder at all her former friend had gone through, and equally full of resolutions to make her in future as happy and comfortable as possible.

Fanny's meditations were of a less satisfactory order. She was not only older in years, but far older in experience than her friend; she felt as if to accept her offer would be to take advantage of the romance of youthful generosity. Moreover, Miss Elphinstone had a parent to consult, and he might not approve of her incurring the expense. "I have no right to be dependant, while by my own exertions I can support myself."

The next morning had finished the little instruction she could give the children, when Miss Elphinstone entered the school-room.

"You see, I have found my way again," said she. "Mrs. Bennett is now dressing, and I have sent a note to beg that you may breakfast with me."

The children now attracted her attention, and for

a moment she paused with the shock; their melancholy and idiotic look and incoherent murmurs had with her the full force of novelty. Recovering herself she tried to notice them, but it was in vain, and in a few minutes the servant returned to say, "That Miss Elphinstone was to do as she pleased about breakfasting in her dressing-room, but that Miss Beaumont could not possibly leave the children."

"Then I will breakfast here," cried Emeline.—"My poor Fanny, and it is in the power of such a woman, and with such children that you have past the last two years!"

They now began talking of their future plans, and Fanny was scarcely prepared for the excessive disappointment which her refusal excited. Emeline had been so accustomed to have her wishes the study of all around that she could scarcely comprehend Fanny's supposing that there could be an objection raised to their gratification.

"I tell you what you may do for me," said Fanny at last. "I feel I can do no more here than a servant could do; I will ask you to aid me in procuring another situation. Could I benefit these children, I own Mr. Bennett's kindness would give him a paramount claim upon my exertions, but I cannot; they are incapable of even attachment."

"Say no more," interrupted Miss Elphinstone, "your accomplishments will secure any situation. Just let me get home, and we will see what can be done."

Again the servant entered, to say that Mrs. Bennett had been waiting in the drawing-room above an hour for Miss Elphinstone. The friends affectionately embraced, and parted hastily; while Fanny sat down, and began to think over the events of the morning. She felt that she had done rightly, and, while her heart warmed at the thought of Emeline's kindness, she could not endure the idea of dependence on her generosity—a generosity, too, unsanctioned by her father. Still a person of Mr. Elphinstone's position in society might serve her in many ways. She was justified in desiring to change her situation, her health, her spirits, were rapidly giving way. Surely she might obtain a situation where she would be treated with something like kindness, and where the children might do some credit to her care. Her first step was to acquaint Mr. Bennett with her intentions, indeed she thought it but due to him to ask his consent; and she at once sat down and asked an interview before he went out the following morning. The next day she received a message to say he was waiting in the library. In as few words as possible, she stated her intentions, adding that even now she should consider it a duty to consider his wishes if he, under the circumstances, wished her to remain.

Mr. Bennett remained silent a few moments, he was grieved that his children should lose one so kind and so trust-worthy, but he had long felt for the isolated and melancholy situation of a young creature shut up in such dreary seclusion. He saw clearly that his

wife would enter into none of his kindly plans for Fanny's advantage, and that to attempt them might only expose her to annoyance: and he was too just a man to throw an obstacle in the way of whatever might be for her benefit. He therefore contented himself with expressing his gratitude for her devotion to the children, his perfect satisfaction with her endeavours, and that if ever she wanted a friend, she had a firm one in himself. Fanny could not thank him, and when she at length attempted to falter out a few grateful words, he interrupted her, "You have nothing to thank me for, I wish I had had more in my power."

The only comment Mrs. Bennett made was "that she supposed Miss Beaumont was going to turn toad-eater to the heiress, but that of course, she could not go till some one else was found to take care of the children."

About this she was not long in suspense, for, during the course of the week, Mr. Bennett found a motherly and very respectable woman, whom he himself introduced to Miss Beaumont, asking her to instruct the new comer in the best method of managing the children. Fanny soon saw that they were in excellent, hands; the new attendant was kind, steady, and had known trouble enough to make her sympathize with misfortune in any shape.

But a new subject of uneasiness arose for Fanny: day after day past by, and she heard nothing of Miss Elphinstone. Was it possible that all she had said

was but the hasty impulse of the moment—could she have forgotten her?

A fortnight had elapsed, a fortnight of constant suffering.

Suspense was too painful to bear, and Fanny, for the first time, began to fear the approach of illness. She was sitting with a feverish head-ache, when a letter was brought: her hand trembled to such adegree that she could scarcely open it, at length she read as follows:

"Dearest Fanny,

"You never can forgive me—the enclosed letter ought to have been sent the very day after I left Harley Street. I found it in my desk when I arrived from a journey into the country which we have been taking. What you have thought I cannot bear to fancy—I come for you to-morrow at one o'clock.—I am sure all our plans will be arranged to our mutual satisfaction.

"Your gratefully

"affectionate

"EMELINE."

A letter in a gentleman's hand-writing was enclosed, and Fanny read, though with tearful eyes, the contents:

"My dear young Friend,

"My spoilt Emeline has repeated her conversation with you yesterday; she is quite surprised that any body can refuse her anything, and so am I. Come to us you must. It would be unkind-

ness, and not independence, to refuse that affection which you yourself lavished on a little friendless girl. We give you a week to make what arrangements you think proper with Mr. and Mrs. Bennett, and then we come to claim you.

"Your affectionate,

"and obliged

"CHARLES ELPHINSTONE."

With what fervent gratitude to Heaven Fanny went to sleep that night! The next day Miss Elphinstone was even before her time. Her father accompanied her, one of those kind and warm-hearted people, whose frank and yet polished manner sets you at ease at once.

With a cold farewell from Mrs. Bennett, whose temper could scarcely restrain itself, and a most kind one from Mr. Bennett, Fanny left their house full of hope and thankfulness. Miss Elphinstone, who was in the gayest spirits, laughed and talked nearly the whole way to Richmond, and Fanny's gaiety rose too under their influence. The drive too was delightful, it was one of those bright sunny days of an early spring, which impart their own genial softness. The carriage turned into a sheltered lane, whose hedges were already begining to put forth that pure yellow green which promises so much, and the starry clusters of the primroses were smiling on either side.

They stopped at a very pretty little cottage, and Miss Elphinstone scarcely waited for the door to open before she led Fanny in. "I forgot to tell you that

you were coming home," said her companion, for the next moment she was kneeling at her mother's feet, and Edith's arms were about her neck! Tears, caresses, and blessings, filled up the first quarter of an hour; when a young man, who had hitherto been concealed in the window-seat, came forward, and claimed a little notice.

Fanny at once recognised her cousin George Beaumont. He had discovered his relations that very morning, through a chance interview on business with Mr. Elphinstone.

The cottage where Mrs. Beaumont now lived had been Mr. Elpinstone's birth-day present to his daughter; and the object of their journey out of town had been to fetch Edith and her mother; a happier party never assembled than dined that day in the cottage parlour, for there Emeline had insisted on dining. Edith could not satisfy herself with looking at her sister, she would not leave her side, and from that day she never did. Fanny soon after married her cousin George Beaumont, and a life of well deserved happiness amply repaid the trials of her youth.

THE

HISTORY OF A CHILD.

THE

HISTORY OF A CHILD.

How well I remember it, that single and lonely laurel tree, it was my friend, my confidant. How often have I sat rocking on the one long, pendant branch which dropped even to the grass below. I can remember the strange pleasure I took in seeing my tears fall on the bright shining leaves, often while observing them have I forgotten the grief that led to their falling. I was not a pretty child, and both shy and sensitive; I was silent, and therefore not amusing. No one loved me but an old nurse—why she should have been fond of me I know not, for I gave her much trouble; night after night has she wakened with my crying—but she only wakened to soothe me. She was far advanced in years, but was still strikingly handsome. Her face, with its bold Roman profile, its large black eyes, is still before me as I used to see it bending over my crib, and singing, or rather croning me to sleep with the old ballad of "Barbara Allen." Never will the most finished music, that ever brought the air and perfume of an Italian summer upon its melody—never will it be sweet in my ears

as that untaught and monotonous tone: my first real sorrow was her departure; life has been to me unhappy enough, but never has it known a deeper desolation than that first parting. It is as present as yesterday; she had married, and was now about to go to a home of her own. How I hated her husband; with the rest of the nursery he was a popular person, for he had been a sailor, and his memory was stored with wild histories of the Buccaneers; nor was he without his own perils; he had been shipwrecked on the coast of Cornwall, and was once prisoner of war, though rescued before the French vessel made harbor. From any one else with what rapt attention should I have listened to these narratives, but to him I always turned a reluctant ear. Whenever he came, which he often did, into the large old nursery, where the hearth would have sufficed for ten fire-places of these degenerate days; I used to draw my stool close to my nurse, and, leaning my head on her knee, keep fast hold of her hand—she encouraged this, and used to tell me she would never go away.

The time of her departure was kept a secret, but I knew it; the coach past the road at the end of the horse-chestnut avenue, and one night, they thought that I was asleep, I heard that two days after she was there to meet the coach, and go to London, to go there forever. I buried my face in my pillow that my crying might not be heard. I slept, and my dreams brought the old avenue, the coach stopping, as vividly as when I really saw them.

I awoke the next morning, pale and heavy eyed, but I was subject to violent head-aches, and all passed off as their effects. Not a word passed my lips of the previous night's discourse. For the first time I felt the bitterness of being deceived; I could have better brooked the approaching separation, had I been trusted with it. But the secrecy made me feel so unworthy and so helpless; young as I was, I should have been proud of my nurse's confidence; at length, after three miserable silent days, the last night came. My nurse gave us all some little keep-sake, though without telling her immediate departure. To me she gave a book, for I was, to use her own expression, "a great scholar." That is, I had not the bodily strength for more active amusement, and was therefore very fond of reading; but to night I had not the heart to look into the pages which at another time would have been greedily devoured. She was hurt at my seeming indifference, and took my brother on her knee, who was all rapture with his windmill; I was very wrong, I could not bear to see him carest, and pushing him violently aside, entreated her with a passionate burst of tears, to love me, and only me.

We slept in a sort of gallery off the nursery, and the next morning I was up with the earliest day-break. Taking the greatest care not to awaken my companions, I put on my clothes as well as I could, and stole down stairs. It was scarcely light through the closed windows, and the shadows took all fantastic semblances, and one or two of the chance rays fell upon

the pictures in the hall, giving them strange and distorted likenesses. There was one stately lady in black, with a huge white ruff that encircled a face yet paler. The eyes seemed to follow me wherever I moved; cold, glassy, immoveable eyes, which looked upon, as if they hated, the little trembling thing that was creeping along below. Suddenly a noise like thunder, at least such it seemed in my ears, rang through the hall. I clung to the oaken bannisters of the staircase, my very heart died within me, and I could scarcely raise my head from the place in which it had almost unconsciously buried itself, to ascertain the cause of an unusual light: the fact was a shutter had been carelessly fastened, and a gust of wind had caused the iron bar to fall. It was, however, fortunate for me, as in my well arranged plan, I had forgotten one very important point; namely, how I was to leave the house. To unfasten the hall door was utterly beyond my strength; now an obvious method of escape presented itself. I opened the window and sprang out, running thence at full speed till I gained the avenue; there I was secure. Breathless with running, agitated and afraid, it is singular how soon I grew composed, and even cheerful in the clear bright morning; its gladness entered into my heart. For a moment I almost forgot the purpose that had brought me there at such an hour: the mists were rising from the park, rolling away like waves of some silvery sea, such as I ever after fancied the seas in fairy tales to be. The clouds were warming into deeper crimson

every moment, till the smallest leaf on the chesnut trees seemed distinct on that bright red sky. How beautifully it was reflected on the lake, and yet it was almost terrible; it seemed to me filled with flame. How huge and dark too rose our two cedars; what a distance did their shadows spread before them; but I then turned to what was brightest. I was delighted to see the dew drops on the pointed speargrass, and the down balls shining with moisture; it is a common superstition in our part of the country that wish and blow away the gossamer round, if it goes at one breath your wish will be granted. I caught one eagerly—I blew with all my strength—alas, only a little of the shining down was displaced; I could scarcely see the remainder for tears; at that moment I heard the horn of the coach. I wonder now that I could distinguish at such a distance; I stopped my ears not to hear it again; and the moment after held my breath to listen. At last I caught sight of the coach in a winding of the road; how glad I felt to think that there was still the hill between us. I had never before seen it coming, though I had often watched it drive past on a summer evening: I saw it pass rapidly through the windings of the green hedges, till it began slowly to ascend the hill. Here my attention was drawn from it, by the sight of my nurse and one of her fellow servants hurrying up the avenue; years—years have past since then, but even now the pang of that moment is cold at my heart. I was standing with my arm round the slender stem of one of the young trees.

I leant my face upon it; but I saw my nurse coming along as distinctly as if I had watched her. The coach stopped at the gate, and the coachman gave a loud and hasty ring, my nurse hurried by without seeing me, another moment and I felt that she was lost to me forever. I sprang forward, I flung my arms around her, I clung to her with the momentary strength of despair; I implored her to take me with her, I said I would work, beg for her, anything, if she would let me go and be her own child. At first she kissed and coaxed me to loose her, but at last the coachman became impatient of waiting; in the fear of the stage going without her, harassed too by all the perplexities which I have since learnt belong to all departures; she exclaimed in the momentary peevishness of not being able to unclasp my arms,—

"What a tiresome child it is, I shall have the coach go without me."

My arms relaxed their tender and passionate clasp, I stood at her side pale, for I felt the color go from my cheek back upon my heart; my eyes drank back their tears, I felt then what I never felt before; the perfect self-control of strong excitement, and I bade her civilly good morning. I walked slowly away from the gate without looking back to see her get into the coach, but hearing the horn echo on the air, I ran to a point of rising ground, I caught the last sight of the horses, and flung myself down on the grass; the words "how tiresome the child is," ringing in my

ears, as if another person at my side delighted to repeat them in every possible way.

To know yourself less beloved than you love, is a dreadful feeling—alas, how often has the remembrance of that bitter hour come back again by some following hour too sadly like the one that went before—How often have I since exclaimed, "I am not beloved as I love."

The consequence of my being so long on the dewy grass, aided by the agitation that I had endured, brought on one of those violent colds to which I have always been subject. It was poor consolation, the undeniable fact that it had been brought on by my own fault. I never coughed without a sensation of shame. Of all shapes that illness can take, a cough is the worst. Pain can be endured in silence, but a cough is so noisy, it inevitably attracts attention; the echo of mine from the vaulted roof was a perpetual torment to myself, because I knew that others must hear it as well. My cough brought also what was the severest of punishments, it kept me within doors, it prevented my daily visit to the old laurel, where I used to share my luncheon with a favorite old pointer of my father's.

One day, while I was sitting by the window, forced, alas, to be shut, I heard a whining at the door. I opened it, and in bounded the dog, overwhelming me with its caresses. Its large bright brown eyes were fixed upon me with all the depth of human affection. It was a delicious sensation to think that anything in

the world had missed me. Clio was a beautiful creature with a coat of glossy blackness only broken by a few spots of tan. I have since heard a lovely head of hair compared to the "down of darkness" and to the raven's wing, but the highest compliment that ever passes through my mind is to liken it to the dark silkiness of my darling Clio. The weather being very dry, no dirt could be brought into the house, and the visits of the intruder were a permitted pleasure. Another source of enjoyment too opened upon me. I began to read the book that my nurse had given me; at first the very sight of it was insupportably painful, but one long weary morning when the severity of illness had softened into that languor which needs some quiet amusement, I opened its pages. It was an epoch in my life, it is an epoch in every child's life, the first reading of Robinson Crusoe. What entire possession it took of my imagination. Henceforth one half of my time was past on that lovely and lonely island. The only thing that I could not understand were Robinson Crusoe's lamentations over his solitude, to me the most unreasonable things in the world. How little did I share his joy when the English vessel came and bore him once more over the sea to his native England. It was a long time before I had any wish to read the rest. For weeks after reading that book, I lived as if in a dream, indeed I rarely dreamt of anything else at night, I went to sleep with the cave, its parrots and goats, floating before my closed eyes; I wakened in some rapid flight from

the savages landing in their canoes. The elms in our own hedges were not more familiar than the prickly shrubs which formed his palisade; and the grapes whose drooping branches made fertile the wild savannahs. When at length allowed to go into the open air, my enjoyment was ten-fold.

We lived in a large, old, and somewhat dilapidated place, only part of the grounds were kept up in their original high order. I used to wander in the almost deserted shrubberies, where the flowers grew in all the luxuriance of neglect over the walks, and the shrubs become trees drooped to the very ground, the boughs heavy with bloom and leaves. In the very heart of one of these was a large deep pond, almost black with the depths of shadow—One bank only was sunny, it had been turf, but one flower after another had taken possession of a situation so favorable. The rododhendron spread its fragile blossom of the softest lilac, beside the golden glories of the Constantinople rose; a variety too of our English roses, had taken root and flourished there. There was the damask, with all its York and Lancaster associations, the white, cold as snow, the little red Ayshire darling, and last but not least, for it grew with a spendthrift's prodigality, the Chinese rose, a delicate frail stranger, yet the last to shed beauty on even our dark November. Below, the pond was covered with water lilies with the large green leaves that support the loveliest of ivory boats, fit for the fairy Queen and her summer court. But these were not the attractions of that solitary pond in my eyes. Its charm was a little

island was a little island which seemed to float upon the dark water; one side of the pond was covered with ancient willow trees, whose long pendant branches dropped forever over the same mournful mirror. One of these trees, by some natural caprice, shot out direct from the bank, a huge, straight bough that formed a complete bridge to the little island—at least so near that a rapid spring enabled me to gain it.—There was only one tree on this miniature island—a curiosly shaped but huge yew tree; it quite rivalled the laurel that used to be my favorite haunt. I would remain hidden in the deep shadows of that gloomy tree, for the whole of my playtime, I was there,

"Monarch of all I surveyed
My right there was none to dispute."

How well I recollect the eagerness with which, one morning, I sprang into its shade. The day before I had been to a juvenile ball given in the neighborhood. I was dressed with unusual care—and I am convinced that dress is the universal passion—and turned to leave the nursery with an unusual glow of complacency, one of the servants smoothing down a rebellious curl. As I past I heard the other say "leave well alone"—and unfortunately I heard the rejoinder also—"Leave ill alone, you mean; did you ever see such a little plain thing." This was but the beginning of my mortifications, that evening was but the first of many coming events that cast their shadows before. Still it was my earliest experience of the bitterness of neglect, and of the solitude of a crowd. I had for several hours the melancholy satisfaction of sit-

ting unnoticed in a corner; at length the Lady of the House, in the most cruel kindness, insisted on my dancing—How the first figure of the quadrille was accomplished I know not. I fancied every one was laughing at me, I had to advance by myself, the room swam round, my head became giddy, I left my unfortunate partner, sprang away, and took refuge in a balcony and a burst of tears. The next morning I had to endure reproof, for I had inflicted the mortification I felt, and the unanswerable question of "What use was my being taught anything?" In sad truth, at that time, it might have seemed very little use indeed. I was a clever, very clever child, but my mind was far beyond my years, and it lacked the knowledge which alone can teach how to use its powers. Moreover I was wholly deficient in all showy talents; for music I had no ear, for drawing no eye, and dancing was positively terrible to my timid temper. My sensitiveness made any attempt at display a hopeless endeavor. An hundred times has my book been returned because I was too anxious that I might say my lesson well, the words died on my lips, I became confused, speechless, while the tears that rose too readily into my eyes appeared like sullenness. And yet at that moment my heart almost stopped beating with its eagerness, to repeat what in reality I had thoroughly mastered, and whose spirit had become a part of my mind.

Still the imagination conquers the real. My head ached with crying when I reached my darling island, and yet in half an hour I was sitting in the shadow of

the yew tree, my arm round Clio's dark and glossy neck, and fancying the pointer an excellent representation of "my man Friday." There was one time in the day, however, when I could never prevail on Clio to be my companion—about six she regularly disappeared, and all my coaxing to keep her at my side was in vain. One afternoon I watched and followed her. She took her way across the long shadows that were now beginning to sweep over the sunny park. She made her way to a small gate that opened on the road, and there lay down patiently awaiting the arrival of her master. I thought I would wait too, for I knew that my father was in the habit of coming in at that gate, as it saved a long round by the road. I soon heard the sound of his horse's hoofs, and felt half inclined to run away. I was so glad that I did not, for my father took me up in his arms and kissed me with the utmost pleasure, saying, —"So you have been waiting for me;" and taking the horse's bridle in one hand, and me in the other, we walked across the park together. I now went to meet him every day; happy, happy, hours that I past on that gate, with the pointer at my feet, looking up with its large human eyes, as if to read in mine when I first caught sight of my father. How I hated the winter with its cold cutting air, its thick fog, that put an end to this waiting; winter, that left out the happiest hour of the day. But spring came again, spring that covered one bank with the sweet languor of the pale primrose, and another with the purple arabia of the breathing violet. No flower takes upon me the

effect of these. Years, long years past away since I have seen these flowers, other than in the sorted bouquet, and the cultivated garden, but those fair fresh banks rise distinct on my mind's eye. They colour the atmosphere with themselves, their breath rises on the yet perfumed air, and I think with painful pleasure over all that once surrounded them, I think of affections gone down to the grave, and of hopes and beliefs which I can trust no more.

It was in the first week of an unusually forward May, that one afternoon, for I had again began my watchings by the Park gate, that my father produced four volumes, and for me. How delicious was the odour of the Russian leather in which they were bound, how charming the glance at the numerous pictures which glanced through the half opened leaves. The first reading of the Arabian Nights was like the first reading of Robinson Crusoe. For a time their world made mine—my little lonely island, dark with the mingled shadow of the yew and the willow, was now deserted, I sought a gayer site, that harmonised better with the bright creations now around me, I found it in a small old fashioned flower garden, where the beds, filled with the richest colours, were confined by small edgings of box into every variety of squares, ovals, and rounds. At one end was the bee house, whence the murmur of myriad insect wings came like the falling of water. Near was a large accacia, now in the prodigality of bloom which comes but every third year; I found a summer palace amid its luxuriant boughs. The delight of reading those en-

chanted pages, I must even to this day rank as the most delicious excitement of my life. I shall never have courage to read them again, it would mark too decidedly, too bitterly, the change in myself,—I need not. How perfectly I recollect those charming fictions whose fascination was so irresistible! How well I remember the thrill of awe which came over me at the brazen giant sitting alone amid the pathless seas, mighty and desolate till the appointed time came, for the fated arrow at whose touch he was to sink down an unsolved mystery bidden by the eternal ocean!

How touching the history of Prince Agib—when he arrives at the lovely island only inhabited by the beautiful boy who dwelt there in solitude and fear till he came! How in the thoughtlessness of youth, they laughed when sweet confidence had grown up between them, at the prediction which threatened that beloved and gentle child with death at Prince Agib's hand! Fate laughs at human evasion—the fated morning comes one false step, and even in the very act of tender service, the knife enters the heart of the predestined victim. Prince Agib sees from the thick leaves of the tree where he had taken shelter, the anxious father, anxious but hopeful, arrive. He comes with music and rejoicing. What does he take back with him! The dead body of his son.

Again with what all but actual belief did I devour the history of the wondrous lamp, whose possessor had only to wish. For weeks I lived in a world of wishes, and yet it was this dreaming world first led

me into contract with the actual. As usual such knowledge began in sorrow.

One morning before the period of leaving the school-room, I heard the report of a gun. In spite of the intricate path of rivers and boundaries I was then tracing, it still occured to me to wonder what could lead to a gun's being fired at that time of year. Alas, I learnt only too soon. On going to the accacia I was surprised not to find my usual companion waiting. As to reading in any comfort, till I had Clio's soft brown eyes watching me, was impossible. I sent off in search of the truant, perhaps she had been fastened up. I found my way to the stable, and to the dead body of my favourite. She had been bitten by an adder, and they had been obliged to shoot her. It was one of those shocking spectacles which remain with you for your life. Even now my dreams are haunted with the sight. I believe at first that horror pre-dominated over regret. I could not cry, I stood and trembling beside the mangled remains of what I had loved so dearly. I prevailed on one of the servants to bury it near my accacia tree. For days afterwards I did nothing but sob on that grave. How desolate the mornings seemed—how the presence of one real sorrow shook to its very foundations my fairy-land. I started from even a moment's forgetfulness as a wrong to the memory of my beloved companion.

At length I began to take an interest in decorating the grave, and planted first one flower and then another. I was not very successful in my gardening

attempts, till at length Lucy came to my assistance. Lucy was the grandaughter of an old blind woman who lived near; an aged retainer of some great family, whose small pension had long out-lasted the original donors. I have seen many beautiful faces since, but nothing that rises to my memory to be compared with Lucy's childish but exceeding loveliness. She was delicately fair, though constant exposure to the sun had touched the little hands, and the sweet face with soft brown, through which came the most transparent colour that ever caught its red from the rose, or its changefulness from the rainbow. Her hair was of that pale yet rich gold so rarely seen: with the sunshine upon it, it was positively radiant; it shone as the wind lifted some of the long soft curls. It was a species of beauty too frail, too delicate, and the large blue eyes had that clear sky-like azure, that violet shadow round the orbs which mark an hereditary tendency to decline. She was in the habit of coming into our gardens to gather roses for distillation. Accustomed from her cradle to strangers and exertion, making friends by a manner whose sweetness was as natural as the smile to her face, Lucy was not the least shy: if she had been, we should never have become acquainted. But when she frankly offered her services to assist in ornamenting the little plot of ground on which my shrubs were drooping, and round which my flowers always made a point of dying; they were accepted on my part with equal surprise and gratitude. Under her more judicious management, the ground was soon covered with leaf and bloom,

and every blossom that put forth was a new link in our intimacy.

"I wish I could do anything to oblige you," was my exclamation at the sight of my first carnation.

"Oh," exclaimed she, the soft colour warming into her cheek with eagerness, "you are a great reader, would you sometimes come and read to my grandmother?" This I easily obtained permission to do, and that every evening I went with Lucy to Mrs. Selby's. The cottage where she lived stood alone in a little nook between our park and the churchyard; yew trees were on the one side, and our cedars on the other, but the garden itself seemed a very fairy-land of sunshine; a jessamine covered the front with its long trailing green branches, and its white delicate blossoms. The porch was enlivened by that rare and odoriferous shrub, the yellow musk rose; It is the only one I have ever seen, but of a summer evening, it covered that little portal with gold, and filled the whole air with its peculiar and aromatic fragrance. We read of the gales that bear from the shores of Ceylon the breathings of the cinnamon groves. I have always fancied that the musk rose resembles them. Inside how cool, clean and neat was the room with its brick floor and large old fire place, and yet there was only Lucy to do everything; I have often thought since of the difference between the children of the rich, and the children of the poor—the first kept apart, petted, indulged, and useless;—the second with every energy in full exercise from the cradle, actively employed, and earning their daily

bread, almost from the hour that they begin to eat it. If there is too much of this in the lower classes, if labour be carried into cruelty, there is infinitely too little of it in the higher. The poor child, as Charles Lamb so touchingly expresses it, is not brought, but "dragged out," and if the wits are sharpened, so too is the soft round cheek. The cripped limb and broken constitution attest the effects of the over-early struggle with penury; but the child of rich parents suffers though in another way; there it is the heart that is crippled, by the selfishness of indulgence and the habit of relying upon others. It takes years of harsh contact with the realities of life to undo the enervating work of a spoilt and over aided childhood. We cannot too soon learn the strong and useful lessons of exertion and self-dependence. Lucy was removed from the heaviest pressure of poverty, but how much did she do that was wonderful in a child of her age! The cottage was kept in the most perfect neatness, and her grandmother's every want watched as only love watches; she was up with the lark, the house was put in order, their own garden weeded, her nosegays collected from all parts, for Lucy was the flower market, the Madeline of our village. Then their dinner was made ready; afterwards, her light song and even lighter step were again heard in the open air, and when evening came on, you saw her in the porch as busily plaiting straw as if the pliant fingers had only just found employment.

That was my time for visiting at the cottage, when the last red shadows turned the old Gothic lattices

of the church into rubies; then on the low bench beside Lucy, I used to sit and read aloud to her grandmother. She was a very remarkable woman, her tall stately figure was unbent by age, and her high and strongly marked features were wanderful in expression for a face where the eyes were closed for ever. She was a north country woman, and her memory was stored with all those traditions which make so large a portion of our English poetry. Lucy was her only link with the present, but for her affection to that beautiful child, she lived entirely with the past. The old castle where she had chiefly lived, whose noble family had perished from the earth as if smitten by some strange and sudden doom, the legends connected with their house,—these were her sole topics of discourse. All these legends were of a gloomy tendency, and I used to gaze on her pale sightless face, and listen to the hollow tones of her voice till my heart sank within me for fear. But if by any chance Lucy left us for a moment, no matter how interesting the narrative, the old woman would suspend her discourse and question me about Lucy's appearance. I did not then understand the meaning of her questions. Alas! how I look back to the hour passed every summer evening in that little shady porch, reading to that blind old woman, Lucy thanking me all the time, with her sweet blue eyes. I have rarely I fear me been so useful since, certainly never so beloved. It was not to last long; August was now beginning, and it came in with violent thunder storms. One of Lucy's occupations was to gather wild straw-

berries in a wood at some distance, and nothing could exceed the natural taste with which she used to arrange the bright scarlet fruit amid the vine leaves she fetched from our garden. Returning over the common, she was caught in a tremendous shower, and wet through. The sudden chill struck to a constitution naturally delicate, and in four and twenty hours, Lucy was no more—I went to see her unconscious of what had happened. The house was shut up; I felt for the first time in my life that vague presentiment of evil which is its certain forerunner; I thought only of the aged woman, and entered hastily yet stealthily in. No one was to be seen in the front room, and I found my way to the one at the back. There were no shutters to the window, and the light streamed through the thin white curtain; it fell on the face of the dead. Beside sat the grandmother, looking the corpse which she became in the course of that night. She never spoke after she felt her child's hand grow cold and stiff in her own. There she lay, that beloved and beautiful girl, her bright hair shining around her, and her face so pale, but with such strange sweetness. I bent down to kiss her, but the touch was death. But why should I go on; I had lost my gentle companion for ever.

I have told the history of my childhood, childhood which images forth our after life. Even such has been mine—it has but repeated what it learnt from the first, Sorrow, Beauty, Love and Death.

THE END.

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